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From the Temporal to the Eternal: The Normative Philosophy of Anselm of Canterbury

Thomas James Ball

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the extent to which Anselm of Canterbury can be described to have possessed a consistent normative philosophy which coherently addressed the question of how the individual *ought* to act. By so doing it will seek to extend the contemporary commentary of Anselm's ethical philosophy beyond the abstract and meta-ethical and analyse the ways in which Anselm's letter collection can be used to show pragmatic approaches to ethical questions. In examining this field, this thesis contains what amounts to two interdependent parts. The first will deal almost exclusively with Anselm's anthropology, theory of will, and ethical philosophy. The second will, broadly speaking, examine the impact of his theology and ethical philosophy upon his societal and political beliefs. This will by no means amount to an exhaustive study of Anselm's normative thought; rather, it will provide key examples of how such an approach opens up new lines of research and furthers the field of Anselm studies, addressing several past issues of contention.

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Thomas James Ball

Submitted for the Degree of PhD in History

History Department

Durham University

2012

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List of Abbreviations

CDH – *Cur deus homo*

DL – *De libertate arbitrii*

DCD – *De casu diaboli*

DC – *De concordia*

DV – *De veritate*

MRH – *Meditatio redemptionis humanae*

EIV – *Epistola de incarnatione verbi*

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Acknowledgements

Dr Giles Gasper deserves thanks for his faith, patience, and encouragement, but most of all for curbing my polemical instincts and instilling in me a modicum of his own, seemingly unending, academic rigor and aplomb. Dr R.W. Dyson was instrumental in igniting my love of medieval philosophy and for many fine conversations over coffee. Without his influence, it is safe to say, that this thesis would never have been conceived, much less written. I should also like to thank Dr Sigbjorn Sonnysen for helping me through my nerves at my first few international conferences, his fascinating perspectives on the 12th century intellectual milieu, and for his persistent kindness.

Dr Tomas Ekenberg and Dr Samu Niskanen have shown great kindness in answering any number of questions about Anselm and furnishing me with electronic copies of their own theses. Dr Sara Uckelman and Dr Irene O'Daly also deserve thanks for their support over a number of years at a variety of conferences. In addition, I would like to thank Dr Simon Mollan for many years of friendship and a steadfast belief in my capacity to reach this goal.

The IMRS has provided essential support and stimulating events without which this thesis could not have been completed. So too, MEMSA has provided an exceptional community in which to work. PIMS at the University of Toronto and especially Dr Greti Dinkova-Bruun for her teaching of palaeography and assistance in the use of the PIMS Library have been of immense help in this project and my general academic development. The Libraries of Durham University and the University of Washington have been instrumental due to their excellent staff and facilities. University College has provided the ideal environment for a budding scholar and I would like to thank its staff and students for their support and fellowship. Floreat Castellum!

Gemma Wain deserves the greatest thanks for helping me survive the blood, sweat, and tears that my thesis seemed to demand. Her constant smile and irrepressible determination that we would both someday finish was, at times, all that kept me typing. A number of others deserve my gratitude: Charlie Rozier for fun times at Kalamazoo and for being an exemplary colleague; David Burke, for challenging my assumptions about history and how it ought to be written; Chris Allan, for many much needed libations and excellent fellowship; the crew in the post-grad attic for fresh coffee, biscuits mid-afternoon, and the occasional burst of very loud music; Richard Hilton for his patience and whisky collection; Kevin Sheehan, who began this process with me and who has been the finest of friends throughout.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents and family for all of their support, love, and encouragement, but especially for not laughing when I told them I wanted to have a career in medieval philosophy.

Introduction

Anselm of Canterbury (1033 – 1109) has long been regarded as one of the foremost intellectual figures of the medieval period. He was born in Aosta at the foot of the Alps in modern day Italy. After the death of his mother he travelled through Burgundy, reaching what was to be his next long term home, the Abbey of Bec in Normandy. Bec had been recently established as a monastic centre and it was here that Anselm was to spend the majority of his adult life. He quickly rose through the ranks, becoming Prior in 1063. After the death of Herluin, the Abbey's founder, Anselm was consecrated Abbot in 1079. Anselm maintained this post until his nomination to the Archbishopric of Canterbury in 1093. Due to persistent conflicts with William Rufus, and Anselm's determination to seek Papal advice from Urban II on how they might be resolved, he set forth, in exile for Rome in 1097. Upon William's death in 1100, Anselm was invited to return by Henry I. His return was short-lived. The demands of homage and the lay investiture of bishops caused Anselm to once more set out to Rome in 1103. Paschal II supported Anselm in his disputes, excommunicating Henry's chief advisor Robert of Meulan. Despite a compromise reached in 1106, Anselm refused to return to England until further concessions were made. Anselm eventually relented in 1107 and lived in ill health at Canterbury until his death in 1109.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the extent to which Anselm of Canterbury can be described to have possessed a consistent normative philosophy which coherently addressed the question of how the individual *ought* to act. By so doing it will seek to extend the contemporary commentary of Anselm's ethical philosophy beyond the abstract and meta-ethical and analyse the ways in which Anselm's letter collection can be used to show pragmatic approaches to ethical questions. In examining this field, this thesis contains what amounts to two interdependent parts. The first will deal almost exclusively with Anselm's anthropology, theory of will, and ethical philosophy. The second will, broadly speaking, examine the impact of his theology and ethical philosophy upon his societal and political beliefs. This will by no means amount to an exhaustive study of Anselm's normative thought; rather, it will provide key examples of how such an approach opens up new lines of research and furthers the field of Anselm studies, addressing several past issues of contention.

Traditionally, the field of Anselm studies has engaged with Anselm in a disparate fashion, indeed, to consider it a coherent field is to overstate the point. There is no shortage of studies which examine Anselm's historical and theological impact, yet comparatively few are to be found in which these are coupled with his philosophical and political concerns. Those that do either neglect the theological aspects of his life, or view Anselm as a political actor with very little to say about the structure of government and the manner in which society ought to manifest. Prime examples of this type of scholarship are provided by Sally Vaughan's intensely political view of Anselm which neglects a coherent description of Anselm as a philosopher and theologian¹ and Sir Richard Southern's account, which lacks elucidation of elements of Anselm's philosophy while denying Anselm a political nature.² There are several reasons why this may have occurred, including, but not limited to, a lack of inter-disciplinary projects, a relative neglect of the letter collection, and a strong tradition of theological treatments informed not by careful scholarship of Anselm's works, but rather by the views of those who have written them. Marilyn McCord-Adams' account of Anselm's philosophy, as informed almost exclusively by purely theological motivations provides a clear example.³ In addition, the majority of the treatments of Anselm's philosophy have focused on his logic, his ontological argument, or his metaphysics (examples include works by Visser and Williams⁴ and K.A. Rogers⁵), indeed, a complete discussion of Anselm as a philosopher seems to never have occurred.⁶ While a number of these texts are of great value to contemporary Anselm scholarship, it would be unreasonable to place upon them the burden of fulfilling a broader remit than they intended. Recent studies of medieval political thought have generally, with several notable exceptions that will be discussed below, ignored Anselm, and indeed all other thinkers with the exception of Augustine prior to John of Salisbury.

¹ Vaughn, Sally N., *Anselm of Bec and Robert of Meulan. The Innocence of the Dove and the Wisdom of the Serpent*, (Berkley: 1987).

² Southern, R. W., *Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge, 1963); Southern, R.W., *Saint Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: 1990).

³ McCord Adams, M 'Anselm on Faith and Reason', Davies, B. and Leftow, B., eds, *The Cambridge Companion to Anselm* (Cambridge, 2004) pp. 32-60.

⁴ Visser, S. and Williams, T. *Anselm* (Oxford, 2009).

⁵ Rogers, K.A. 'Anselm on Free Will and the (Possibly Fortunate) Fall', *The Saint Anselm Journal* 5.2 (Spring 2008).

⁶ Visser and Williams set out with this aim but were not wholly successful as will be discussed below.

By examining Anselm as a normative philosopher it is possible to address several of these lacunae and the most remarkable facet of Anselm's philosophical accomplishment, his consistency of thought and argumentation across each element of the normative spectrum will become apparent. It should be stated at the outset that the interest to be found in such a project is not necessarily in the discovery of new or previously unexamined philosophical content, or even to portray Anselm as a thinker of rare originality in his time period, although at times this is the case. Equally it is not the purpose of this thesis to deny Anselm's theological heritage and deeply religious mode of life. The majority of the elements of Anselm's ethical philosophy and political views were informed by his monastic environment and religious belief, so to belittle these facets would be to attempt to make Anselm into something he was not. Rather, the purpose of this thesis is to present Anselm as a consistent and coherent normative thinker who embraced every element of the path between the temporal and eternal.

The first section of this thesis will comprise four chapters. The first will include a brief discussion of Anselm's anthropology, theory of will, and ethical philosophy as they can be read through his philosophical treatises and meditations. This will be primarily determined through an examination of *De libertate arbitrii*, *De casu diaboli*, and *De veritate*, although in order to add clarity and demonstrate the consistency of Anselm's work, other volumes will be used as required. The purpose of this chapter will not be to revise substantially modern scholarship on Anselm's ethical philosophy (although this will at times be necessary), but rather to set forth a textually based foundation upon which the subsequent chapters can build. By excluding analysis of the letter collection in this chapter, it will be possible to compare Anselm's formal thought against the more pragmatic concerns of later chapters. In addition, it will be critical to establish the inter-related nature of Anselm's theological anthropology, metaphysical conception of the will, and ethical theory of just action. By so doing, a coherence essential to any program of normative thought can be shown.

This will be followed with a discussion of Anselm's teleological conception of ethical theory. Most of the material in this chapter will be taken from Anselm's letter collection, although substantial attention will also be paid to linking these writings to his philosophical works. Not only will it focus upon the way in which life ought to be lived, but it will differentiate

between the immediacy of a specific ethical action and the composite effects of multiple ethical decisions. Recent scholarship has focused increasingly on the extent to which Anselm's thought ought to be described as teleological in nature, as will be discussed in the literature review section of this introduction; however, these discussions have generally focused upon technical aspects of a modern philosophical reading of Anselm's works. In so doing they have provided a somewhat ahistorical examination with little or no focus upon his broader corpus and letter collection. This thesis seeks to take the question of a teleological Anselm as an historical subject by asking how important the attainment of the good life was to Anselm and the extent to which he developed this conception and encouraged others to follow it as a form of ethical philosophy. The chapter will end with a discussion of Anselm's position on those living a secular life, establishing that his normative philosophy was intended to encompass more than those who were monastic and seeking to show that non-monastic individuals were still able to lead a good life.

The third chapter will examine Anselm's ethics of intent, providing a foundation upon which Anselm can be compared to other twelfth century thinkers and showing the manner in which God is able to judge men on an ethical basis. The manner in which Anselm describes man's intent will be discussed, seeking to establish that conceptions of ethics of intent were part of the broader intellectual milieu of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. This analysis will primarily utilise Anselm's letter collection, allowing examples to be given of intention in monastic and non-monastic settings. It will begin to explore the scenarios in which Anselm deals with ideas of epistemological uncertainty and the unknown consequences of ethical situations. It will further differentiate between 'Holy Intention' as it pertains to an extended life plan (or teleology) and the intention that pertains to daily actions. By so doing the distinction between sin and bad ethical action will become increasingly clear. Ethics of intent also served as a way in which individuals could pragmatically examine their adherence to the will of God, providing a strong connection between Anselm's ethical philosophy and his normative approach to practical ethics.

Chapter four will explore Anselm's conception of virtue ethics. Virtue ethics were a common feature of many medieval thinkers, but commentary upon Anselm makes this

conception conspicuous in its absence.⁷ Rarely elucidated beyond the meta-ethical in his philosophical writings, references to virtue and vice are comparatively common in his letter collection and, as such, the letter collection will provide the majority of the source material for this chapter. Virtue and vice represent a central component of his normative philosophy and, in addition, comprise the best method by which humans are able to judge other humans. The chapter will conclude with pride and humility presented as a case study of Anselm's views on vices and virtues. Much as it is possible to deduce from the manner in which Anselm discusses ethics of intent that it is scarcely a unique feature of Anselm's work in the intellectual landscape of the time, so to the same observation can be made with confidence when examining Anselm's virtue ethics.

The second portion of this thesis examines the manner in which the ethical foundation established in the first section is extended throughout Anselm's letter collection into areas of society and government. The fifth chapter will examine obedience, a common area of study for Anselm scholars, and will seek to highlight the ethical aspects that can be seen in the normative analysis. The chapter will pertain purely to the pragmatic examples given by Anselm as a way of seeking to contrast the theories presented in the first half of the thesis with traditional monastic practice. The chapter will be divided into two sections, the first examining how obedience provides parameters on personal liberty and the second analysing the way in which obedience was a critical facet of monastic society. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of those who are not obedient and the manner in which Anselm feels they ought to be punished and repent.

The final chapter will evaluate Anselm's relationships with kings and princes. In so doing it will examine what can be learnt about Anselm's political inclinations from the letters he sent and received and the extent to which it can be generalised as a theory of society and government. This will be briefly compared to his writings on monastic governance and similarities between the two based on conceptions of ethics and theology will be drawn. It will conclude with a discussion of Anselm's position on violence and warfare and the manner in which this affects the role of the potentate.

⁷ Arjo Vanderjagt's chapter is the notable exception to this point and will be discussed at length elsewhere.

Three distinct traditions have dominated the study, by English speaking historians, of Anselm. The first, and indeed, the most prominent, is best exemplified by, and largely based upon, the work of Sir Richard Southern. Broadly speaking, this approach can be summarised as a portrayal of Anselm as a monk first and foremost, with his philosophy, theology, actions, and attitudes exclusively motivated by this identity. To this end, Anselm's overwhelming motivation is presented in terms of his desire for obedience to exist in all things. His role outside the cloisters is presented as an extremely reluctant one. He is portrayed as politically unwilling and, at times, naïve. His philosophical work is rarely attributed merit beyond its theological implications with little consideration given to what his ethics might mean to the secular. As C. J. Holdsworth cogently remarked, 'Characteristically we are given not so much an analysis of Anselm's thought, but a demonstration of the logical and theological limits within which his arguments are valid and convincing.'⁸ Southern's monastic view of Anselm's character has been generally accepted by the scholarly community, although there are many who disagree with elements of his characterization strongly. Southern's influence can clearly be seen in a number of other prominent commentators such as G.R. Evans.⁹

Chief amongst them has been Sally Vaughan who has consistently argued that Anselm was consciously seeking to appear saintly and, in a manner of speaking, played an active role in ensuring that his own hagiography was presented appropriately. He did so through the adherence to a series of *topoi* common at the time. A key component of this view is the recognition of Anselm as a shrewd political figure in his own right. It is not within the remit of this thesis to discuss at any great length the argument that ensued between Vaughan and Southern. Rather, it can be recognised in the recent work by Eileen Sweeney that a compromise position between the two factions has been rising to the forefront.¹⁰

Neither Southern nor Vaughan have adequately addressed the third type of commentary that has traditionally existed in historical accounts of Anselm's life and work. Political historians

⁸ Holdsworth, C. J. (1965), *Saint Anselm Reconsidered*. History, 50: 60–65.

⁹ See Evans, G.R., *Anselm* (Connecticut, 1989), - *Anselm and Talking About God* (Oxford, 1978), and - *Anselm and a New Generation* (Oxford, 1980).

¹⁰ Sweeney provides an excellent and highly succinct summary of the main issues behind the disagreement. Sweeney, pp. 38 – 42.

such as Norman F. Cantor and Walter Ullman who have tended to view Anselm's life in terms dictated exclusively by the broader themes of the Investiture Conflict have long been marginalised in more traditional historical accounts. Anselm is presented as dedicated to the programme of Gregorian Reforms and acting in a politically motivated manner in order to ensure that such reforms were carried out. While out of vogue in recent times, this view of Anselm played a critical role in older works, such as those written by Church and in the German tradition in the writings of Liebermann and Gierke.

This view, and Cantor's seminal book, were summarily dismissed by Southern as possessing an approach so different from his own that he felt it best not to comment. This response, and Southern's dominance in the English speaking tradition, may well account for the dwindling use of this method of analysis, although it may also be attributed to a growing number of studies examining individual aspects of the investiture controversy with fewer titles dedicated to the broader theme.

For the purposes of a study of Anselm's normative philosophy none of these views are sufficient in isolation to provide historical background, although each has a role to play. The prevalent view of Anselm as formed by his monastic environment and theological background, as espoused by Southern, is one which must not be ignored. So too, it must it be recognised that, as Anselm was the scion of a noble family, his early education and environment would have prepared him for the pragmatic rigours of life as a Prior, Abbot, and Archbishop to such an extent that elements of Vaughan's view must be taken into account. Similarly, it seems naïve to suggest that Anselm was unaffected by the broader sweep of Gregorian reforms; a political reality so stark that Cantor suggests it was one of the four great political shifts to have occurred in western political history.¹¹ Anselm's meetings with a series of Popes in Rome, presence at key councils, and direct communication with successive Popes and their legates confirms at least the partial feasibility of this view.

Although the compromise view brought forth by Sweeney would initially seem the most persuasive, the account of Anselm presented in this thesis will build a substantial body of evidence to suggest that Cantor and Ullman's view of Anselm as a Gregorian reformer

¹¹See Cantor, Norman F. *Church, Kingship, and Lay Investiture in England 1089 – 1135* (Princeton, 1958) pp. 6 - 9.

should be revisited and integrated with other elements of the modern conception of Anselm as a historical figure. This is not to minimise the importance of the theological Anselm, but rather to provide an account that seeks to be as holistic as possible. Two recent accounts which successfully bring out elements of Anselm's theology in a manner which integrates it into a broader context of Anselm as a thinker and historical figure are those by David Hogg and Eileen Sweeney.

David Hogg's discussion of thought and prayer interacts with the current study on a single critical level; that prayer was not strictly limited to the mind and voice, but could involve action either individually or within a broader community. He accomplishes this task through use of the letter collection and by embracing a methodology that seeks to incorporate the results with Anselm's philosophical and theological works. The very idea that action, when undertaken appropriately, can, to Anselm, form a bridge between the earthly world and the divine is a central theme of the present thesis and, while Hogg leaves the broader consequences unexplored, his allowance for Anselm's theology to be effectively integrated into a broader schema opens a number of possibilities. This point of view affirms and validates the normative approach to the current project connecting Anselm's theological, ethical, and political philosophies into a single inter-connected system of how the individual ought to behave. Hogg goes further than other contemporary scholars in this vein, acknowledging that Anselm believed that truth contains ethical implications and is intended to be lived, however, his exposition of what these might be is substantially less than will be afforded by this study, especially as he allows no room for discussion of the political.¹²

Eileen Sweeney provides a far-reaching and integrated approach to the study of Anselm's texts with a research methodology focused upon highlighting the tensions between different aspects of his thought and showing how such tensions were the result of a felt theology largely consistent throughout. While the book ought not to be described as wholly theological, its impact upon this thesis is largely theological in nature. Anselm's normative

¹² See Hogg, David. *Anselm of Canterbury: The Beauty of Theology* (Ashgate, 2004).

ethical and political considerations are, at most, tangential to her book and, as such, while there is very little in her work with which this thesis disagrees, the overlap is not significant.¹³

However, elements of Sweeney's research methodology and her acknowledgement of the value of further research along similar lines, form the core of the present thesis. Her presentation of Anselm's letter collection as a source of information about what he intended others to do and the manner in which he wished them to behave is a key facet of the later chapters of this thesis. In her own words, 'We can see Anselm in his letters pushing not just what *is* but what *should* be true about his relationship to the abbot or prior to whom he writes; there is in his language an edge of aspiration and obligation.'¹⁴ This statement of the normative value of Anselm's letters provides substantial validation to the merit of the methodology to be proposed for the current study.

In contrast, the majority of the philosophical studies of Anselm's work choose to focus upon the treatises to the virtual exclusion of the prayers and letter collection. This is perhaps best epitomised by what is still the standard introductory text to Anselm's thought, Jasper Hopkins' *A companion to the Study of Saint Anselm*. Such introductory texts rarely include a sufficient study of Anselm as an ethical philosopher, let alone exploring the normative implications of his broader thought and Hopkins is no exception. The majority of volumes that include Anselm as an ethical philosopher focus upon his conceptions of the will and justice. The past decade has seen a wealth of new interpretations of Anselm's will, most notably those of Tomas Ekenberg and K.A. Rogers.

Ekenberg provides a mechanistic and technical approach, self-consciously focused upon a limited corpus of Anselmian texts. That having been said, his work within those parameters provides an excellent introduction to Anselm's accounts of free will, individual action, and, to an extent, the manner in which these interact with ethical schema. For the purposes of the present project, his work lacks a sufficient grasp and acknowledgement of the theological intent behind much of Anselm's philosophical works. Ekenberg unapologetically refrains from incorporating any aspect of the letter collection which accounts for the majority of the

¹³ Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury*, p. 42.

¹⁴ Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury*, p. 68.

disagreements between his works and the current project.¹⁵ Rogers, in a series of journal articles, provides a divergent analysis incorporating a similar methodology of Anselm's works on will.¹⁶ While neither commentator has yet produced a generally accepted account of Anselm's theories on will, it is a critical area of study that will be addressed throughout the present thesis.

A highly technical account of Anselm's ethical thought is provided by Jeffrey Brower, in his chapter *Anselm on ethics*.¹⁷ He ascribes a greater value to links with Saint Augustine than this thesis intends. In addition, he ultimately believes that Anselm is best characterized as deontological with an emphasis upon justice above and beyond all other virtues. It is not clear that Brower adequately differentiates between sin, ethical action, and ethical theory, and, as a result, his account of Anselm as an ethical thinker is at times confused and limited. The present thesis will focus far more extensively upon Anselm's letter collection and, in so doing, provide a more coherent overview of Anselm's thought. To his credit, Brower admits in an endnote that, 'Anselm's views have received very little attention from contemporary scholars, and as a result there is no satisfactory systematic treatment of them available in the contemporary literature.'¹⁸ For the purposes of the present thesis this generalisation has been taken to include Brower's own. While a discussion of Anselm as a normative philosopher will not be sufficient to fill this lacuna, a major component in this thesis is to establish the extent to which Anselm's ethical theory can be drawn forth from his letter collection.

¹⁵ See Ekenberg, T., 'Free Will and Free Action in Anselm of Canterbury', *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 22. 4 (2005) pp. 301 – 318.

¹⁶ See Rogers, K.A. 'Anselm on Free Will and the (Possibly Fortunate) Fall', *The Saint Anselm Journal* 5.2 (Spring 2008); Rogers, K. A., 'Anselm's Indeterminism', *The Anselmian Approach to God and Creation*, Studies in the History of Philosophy, vol. 44 (New York, 1997) pp. 91 – 101; Rogers, K. A., 'Anselm on Eudaemonism and the hierarchical structure of moral choice', *Religious Studies* 41 (2005) pp.249-268; Rogers, K. A., 'Anselm on the Ontological Status of Choice', *International Philosophical Quarterly* 52 (2012) 183-197.

¹⁷ Brower, J. E., 'Anselm on Ethics', *The Cambridge Companion to Anselm* ed. Davies, B. and Leftow, B. (Cambridge, 2004)pp. 222 – 256.

¹⁸ Brower, 'Anselm on Ethics', p. 251.

This view is contrasted by Sigbjorn Sonnesyn who provides an interesting discussion of the extent to which Anselm is best described as teleological or deontological.¹⁹ The present treatment will largely agree with Sonnesyn, although due to the restrictions of his limited project, certain differences will emerge. The greatest difference will be the rejection of a simple paradigm of deontological and teleological systems of ethics as mutually exclusive. In addition, the reliance upon the letter collection in the present project extends the ethical conception of Anselm's work to include a greater degree of practical advice than is acknowledged in Sonnesyn's work. However, it is upon the basis of Sonnesyn's framework of happiness as a key component of the ethically good God-created man that the teleology addressed in the second chapter of this thesis shall rest.

In their 2009 volume creatively entitled *Anselm*, Visser and Williams, set forth to provide, 'a fresh assessment of Anselm's thought as presented through his own writings.'²⁰ As such it is more to be lauded for its intent than its execution. While it agrees with the points made in this thesis to a limited extent, the overall conclusions about the nature of Anselm as a philosopher are divergent. This is partially due to a lack of any political assessment on behalf of its authors and a number of instances in which their readings of Anselm's letters seem limited. They are rarely willing fully to integrate Anselm's philosophical works with his letter collection and end up asking more questions about Anselm as a thinker than they answer. In particular they question the applicability of Anselm's ethical thought in pragmatic scenarios, a key question which this thesis seeks to address through the extended use of Anselm's letter collection.

Arjo Vanderjagt's chapter, *The Devil and Virtue: Anselm of Canterbury's Universal Order*, is a critical source for this thesis.²¹ His methodological approach and intensive use of Anselm's letters effectively validate the value of an extended study of this nature. Although he is limited in his scope, he begins to explore themes of virtue, teleology, and intent, which will be addressed in far greater detail in the first four chapters of this thesis. Several key

¹⁹ See Sonnesyn, Sigbjorn Olsen, "Ut sine fine amet summam essentiam": The Eudaimonist Ethics of St. Anselm.' *Mediaeval Studies* vol. 70 (Toronto, 2008) pp. 1 – 28.

²⁰ Visser and Williams (2009) p. v.

²¹ Vanderjagt, Arjo. 'The Devil and Virtue: Anselm of Canterbury's Universal Order', in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*. Ed. Bejczy, Istvan P. and Newhauser, Richard G. (Leiden, 2005) pp. 33 - 51.

differences exist between Vanderjagt's interpretation of Anselm's ethics and the one which will be expounded in this thesis. Most critically, Vanderjagt restricts Anselm's scope of concern to his immediate monastic colleagues, whereas it will be shown repeatedly in the present project that Anselm intended his ideas to be applicable to both the monastic and secular communities.²²

The methodology to be employed in this thesis, therefore, is to draw upon the works previously mentioned of Vanderjagt and Sweeney in holistically reading Anselm's letter collection, philosophical tracts, and theological writings in order to gain a broader perspective on his thought as a whole. It will not be possible to draw attention to each of his letters, nor will it be necessary to examine each of his theological and philosophical volumes, as not all are pertinent to the current discussion or conducive to the limited scope of this account. The letters used are those that most effectively embody broader philosophical messages and most clearly interact with Anselm's philosophical thought. It is not the case that the letters omitted provide an antithesis to this account, merely that they serve to obfuscate rather than clarify. It is not the purpose to discuss in detail from whence these conceptions originated, but rather to piece together a holistic account of Anselm's letters as they provide evidence of his normative philosophy.

Such is the coherence of Anselm's normative philosophy, the evidence presented in this thesis has been arranged thematically unless otherwise indicated. Although on occasion it is possible to observe shifts in Anselm's thought over time, for the majority of the examples given a chronological approach would serve only to obfuscate and confuse while offering little practical value in return.

Normative philosophy, or the study of how one ought to behave, provides a powerful method of analysis for thinkers whose works do not necessarily reflect the intellectual frameworks involved in modern scholarship. Anselm provides a prime example of a thinker whose work has been fragmented in order to fit into modern conceptions of delineated disciplines. His ethics, as portrayed in his philosophical treatises, lack a degree of applicability common to most ethical theories on two levels. This was primarily due to the

²² Vanderjagt does not explicitly rule out a secular ethic in Anselm's writings, it is simply not his focus in this chapter.

focus of the works which espoused them, as the treatises which contain them were often written as educational volumes to help monastic students understand the scriptures. The technical questions that therefore arise make the ethical content verge upon the meta-ethical, with few words spared for practical application.

In contradistinction to this perceived problem, his letter collection provides a wealth of material and a store of advice about how his correspondents ought to behave. A prime example can be taken from his letters to Kings and Princes. When taken in the context of purely pragmatic works of history, they seem to tell the reader little of what Anselm feels about the broader questions of political structure and obligation might be. However, when they are analysed in conjunction with Anselm's ethical philosophy and seen in combination with each other, a clear picture of how the Prince ought to behave begins to emerge. This is not to say that Anselm possessed a robust political philosophy, however, it does demonstrate a consistent normative theory that provides a coherent explanation of how the political powers ought to behave.

The use of a normative analysis in the medieval period is by no means unique, although it is most often used in discussions of overtly political thinkers. R.W. Dyson's *Normative Theories of Society and Government in Five Medieval Thinkers*²³ effectively establishes the method as a manner in which primarily theological writings can be evaluated for their ethical and political content. Critically this in no way deleterious to their theological concerns, but rather seeks to provide an effective framework for a broader evaluation of the intent and possible reception of the ideas they contain. Although the use of this method of analysis has been slow to reach letter collections, it seems intuitively valid to assume that the advice on pragmatic concerns given in a letter collection can be seen as a good indication of what one *ought* to do from the perspective of the author.

²³ See Dyson, R.W., *Normative Theories of Society and Government in Five Medieval Thinkers: St. Augustine, John of Salisbury, Giles of Rome, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Marsilius of Padua* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003).

Modern conceptions of normative philosophy are strongly tied to a deontological problematization of ethics as a field.²⁴ Decisions that moral agents make, are considered based upon what is right for that agent within a subjective context bounded by rules that do not provide goods which are in and of themselves external to the agent in question. It will be shown in this thesis that, while Anselm adheres roughly to this modern understanding of a deontological conception of normativity, he does not do so exclusively, as goods which are external to the ethical agent are also considered to have value in and of themselves.

As such, this thesis will call into question the modern distinction between deontology and teleology by questioning the extent to which a deontological view of ethical action can account for external goods which are the realm of the divine and therefore teleological to the ethical agent. Examples given will include the reduction of sin and, as previously mentioned in connection with Sonnesyn, the individual striving to live a 'good life'. Such teleological elements are most clearly seen in Anselm's letter collection and provide an insight into how the role of the ethical agent was perceived in relation to the abstract divine.

The use of Anselm's letters as a valuable extension of his philosophical and theological works has been gaining popularity, with Visser and Williams, Hogg, and Sweeney notable for their application of this methodological element. Sweeney in particular has worked to bring the disparate elements of Anselm's thought into a cohesive whole. However, her approach is more systematic than normative and she self-consciously avoids discussion of ethical and political implications.

Vanderjagt's account relies upon a similar methodology, placing the narrative of specific circumstances within the letter collection as a more critical facet than the broader chronological narrative. He cites two figures in establishing his approach. The first is Martha Nussbaum and her work *Love's Knowledge*. By showing that certain elements of ethical thought are specifically related to the narrative of specific letters and lived experiences, this manner of viewing Anselm's letters is extremely useful. Perhaps more so is his second example of Anthony Cunningham in *The Heart of What Matters*. The allowance

²⁴ For a historiographical survey see: Darwell, Stephen, ed, *Deontology*, (Oxford, 2003). For further discussion see: Turner, Stephen P., *Explaining the Normative*. (Cambridge, 2010). pp. 1 – 28.

that this provides for emotional motivation and the impact that this can provide in any discussion of a broader ethical framework, particularly as it is taken in a normative context for the purpose of this thesis, is a powerful tool for extending Anselm's philosophical beliefs to incorporate pragmatic scenarios.²⁵

By joining Vanderjagt's use of Anselm's letters to further develop discussions of his ethical philosophy and Sweeney's exceptional determination for a holistic conception of Anselm as a thinker it will be possible to discover the normative Anselm.

While it is not the purpose of the present thesis to engage in a detailed critique of the manuscript tradition of Anselm's letter collection and philosophical works, a degree of discussion is necessary before proceeding.²⁶ Anselm's letter collections range from c1070 until close to his death in 1109. As such, they provide a unique insight into his thought upon a range of matters both pragmatic and philosophical. Although Anselm's collection is unusually large, it was by no means unique and fits into a broader trend of correspondence. The eleventh and twelfth centuries saw an increase in the volume and quality of letter production.²⁷ Anselm is no exception to this and provides an exceptional volume when compared to other post-conquest Archbishops of Canterbury. As Niskanen writes, 'Anselm is held to be a key proponent of this literary phenomenon, given the concentration on friendship in many of his letters, his original and elegant handling of the issue, his literary quality, and his letters' relatively wide dissemination during the first decades of the twelfth century.'²⁸ Given the importance of Anselm as a writer of letters, as outlined above, it is surprising that further research has not been carried out in order to establish their content.

There are two main manuscript editions that have been employed by modern scholars in the examination of Anselm's letters. The more prominent is the edition by Schmitt, which has been used for the majority of the English speaking commentary and translations. The other

²⁵ Vanderjagt, *The Devil and Virtue*, pp. 35 -36.

²⁶ For a detailed examination of the scholarship and manuscript traditions in the study of Anselm's letter collections see Niskanen, S. *The Letter Collections of Anselm of Canterbury*, 2012.

²⁷ Constable, *Letters and Letter-Collections*, 1976, p. 31. Constable (*ibid.*, p. 26) and Niskanen, *The Letter Collections of Anselm of Canterbury*. pp. 35 – 66.

²⁸ Niskanen, *The Letter Collections of Anselm of Canterbury*. p. 42.

edition is Picard's.²⁹ The two collections diverge slightly in the manuscript traditions that they follow, with Picard placing a greater emphasis upon Anselm's supervised correspondence that was collected c.1093.³⁰ Niskanen is currently involved in a new edition of Anselm's letters, although the first volume will not be available until 2014. This edition will change the common numbering of the letters; however, conversations with Niskanen have indicated that, while substantial changes to the texts will occur, any changes made are unlikely to impact upon the present thesis.³¹

A number of issues must be addressed when approaching a letter collection and assessing its contents. Chief amongst them is the composition of the collection. A long standing dispute has existed in Anselm scholarship about the extent to which Anselm was responsible for the shaping and content of the collection.³² The evidence put forward in this thesis tends to support Logan and Niskanen's contemporary interpretations to the detriment of Southern's.³³ However, for the purposes of this thesis, either case is equally useful. If the letters were heavily edited by Anselm, then it is safe to assume that they adhere very closely to his philosophical views and were, at the very least, approved to become part of the Anselmian canon. If this was not the case, and they were unedited letters collected by Eadmer, then the advice given by Anselm to his correspondents is likely to be an accurate reflection of the way in which he would historically interact with those around him, although

²⁹ *Diui Anselmi archiepiscopi Cantuariensis opera omnia quattuor tomis comprehensa*, ed. Jean Picard, Cologne, 1612; repr. Théophile Raynaud (ed.), *Sancti Anselmi archiepiscopi Cantuariensis opera omnia*, Lyon, 1630.

³⁰ This arrangement is preserved in the mss. Paris, BnF lat. 14762; London, BL Cotton Claudius A. XI; and Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 135.

³¹ Hopkins (Hopkins, J., *Companion to the Study of St. Anselm* (Minneapolis, 1972)) and Fröhlich both provide clear assessments of the chronology of Anselm's philosophical writings. As observed above, the precise dating of each work is of little interest to the present study as the degree of consistency involved in the topics to be discussed remains high throughout. This thesis employs Schmitt's edition (*S. Anselmi cantuariensis archiepiscopi opera omnia*, 5 vols. Edited by F. S. Schmitt, Stuttgart: Friedrich Froman Verlag, 1984.) of Anselm's works in Latin for all quotations. English translations for the letters are from Fröhlich (*The Letters of Saint Anselm of Canterbury*, 3 vols, ed. and trans. Walter Fröhlich, *Cistercian Studies Series*, 96, 97, 142 (Michigan, 1990–1994).) with emendations where necessary. The translation of the treatises is that of Hopkins and Richardson with occasional emendations.

³² An excellent summary can be found in Sweeney, *Anselm of Canterbury*, pp. 38 – 42.

³³ Logan, Ian, 'Ms. Bodley 271: Establishing the Anselmian Canon?', *Saint Anselm Journal*, 2 (2004), pp. 67–80. Logan, Ian, 'Anselm and Thidricus: Revisiting MS Bodley 271', in *Anselm and Abelard. Investigations and Juxtapositions*, ed. G. E. M. Gasper & H. Kohlenberger, Toronto, 2006, pp. 67–86.

they may be less likely to correspond with his philosophical views. This having been said, no canonical single manuscript survives,³⁴ so the two views are likely to be equally valid. In brief, the extent to which the collection was edited causes pause for reflection, but in no way hinders the aim of this study.

Anselm's correspondences were not letters in the modern sense of the word.³⁵ They were often intended to be read aloud by the courier and, at times, additional information would be sent with that individual in case the letter was to be intercepted. As a result, the letter itself is often a literary device and critical pragmatic information is omitted.³⁶ This can be problematic when relying on Anselm's letters for accurate historical accounts, but can, at times, enhance the philosophical content. Particularly important examples of this can be seen in the chapter on obedience.

This phenomenon no doubt contributed to the longevity of the value of collections of Anselm's letters. The function the collections were to play in subsequent generations has been summarised most succinctly by Fröhlich as Anselm having, 'conceived his letter collection to be a work of literature forming the complementary part of his philosophical and theological writings.'³⁷ Unfortunately Fröhlich does not explore this line of enquiry to its logical conclusions, although this thesis intends to do so. Both Fröhlich and Sweeney ascribe a great deal of credence to the notion that Anselm wrote a limited number of his letters with the intent of protecting the freedom of the church. While this does not comprise a high percentage of the letter collection as a whole, it is a topic that will be discussed in detail in the second half of this thesis.

This thesis, then, will seek to analyse how Anselm felt individuals *ought* to behave, giving particular emphasis to the under-researched areas of society and government and pragmatic solutions to ethical problems. A foundation will be provided by Anselm's philosophical treatises, prayers, and meditations, which will then be examined with the more pragmatic letter collection as a welcome addition. By so doing, this thesis will seek to establish a

³⁴ Niskanen, *The Letter Collections of Anselm of Canterbury* p. 21.

³⁵ See Constable, Giles, *Letters and Letter-Collections, Typologie des sources du moyen âge occidental*, 17, Turnhout, 1976.

³⁶ Niskanen, *The Letter Collections of Anselm of Canterbury*, pp. 27 – 28.

³⁷ Fröhlich, *The Letters of Saint Anselm of Canterbury*, vIII p. 6.

consistency across differing elements of Anselm's thoughts and ultimately across different individuals, ethical situations, and societal settings. As a result it will be shown that Anselm possessed a deep, far reaching, and consistent conception of how the individual *ought* to live.

Anselm's Ethics

Anselm's ethical philosophy is not self-subsistent. It is embedded in a variety of sources ranging from prayers and meditations to philosophical treatises and letters. Almost all of these disparate tracts were written with a purpose other than ethical exposition in mind, such as clarification of scriptural study or elucidation of monastic obligations. Anselm's ethical writings are also typically related to, and conditioned by, preoccupations that are not in and of themselves ethical. Nonetheless, careful analysis of these sources reveals a coherent ethical philosophy that exhibits a high degree of consistency and sophistication. For the purposes of this chapter, in order to set forth the foundations of Anselm's ethical theory, his treatises and meditations will be examined in isolation. This will allow the subsequent analysis of Anselm's letter collection which will dominate the chapters that follow to take place within a clearer context and will show, over the course of this thesis, the coherence of his normative thought.

This chapter will consist of an attempt to re-create Anselm's ethics by drawing together the varying strands of Anselm's thought into a coherent account of man, his characteristics, and how he therefore ought to behave. It will begin with the characteristics of the created man, focusing upon love, happiness, and reason as immutable facets of his existence. The manner in which these facets interact is governed by the two wills that may be found in every man: the animalistic and the higher. The manner in which reason allows man to discern and choose between the two, and the reasons why man must have free choice, will next be addressed, along with a discussion of the different categories of man in relation to their acceptance of the grace of God. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of truth and justice as they relate to action and the ways in which men ought to govern their actions with these principles in mind.

Beginning even in the *Monologion*, Anselm maintained a consistent interest in the nature of man throughout his corpus of texts. This exposition is most often confined to theological considerations, such as how man ought to interact within God's broader cosmology. However, as such elucidations require by their very nature a definition of man's properties, they are of interest to any discussion of Anselm's conception of ethical philosophy.

Anselm takes pains to ensure that his discussion of ethical theory is grounded upon the nature of man and his rational propensities. Indeed, rational discrimination of ethical conceptions and truth is highlighted in the *Monologion* as a fundamental facet of man's existence:

Indeed, for a rational nature to be rational is nothing other than for it to be able to discriminate what is just from what is not just, what is true from what is not true, what is good from what is not good, what is more good from what is less good. But the ability [to make these discriminations] is thoroughly useless and superfluous to rational nature unless what it distinguishes it [also] loves or disapproves in accordance with the dictates of correct discrimination. Herefrom, then, we see quite clearly that every rational [being] exists for the following purpose: viz., that even as by rational discrimination he judges a thing to be more or less good, or else to be no good at all, so he might love that thing in proportionately greater or lesser degree, or else reject it.³⁸

³⁸Anselm, *Monologion*, Chapter 68. Denique rationali naturae non est aliud esse rationalem, quam posse discernere iustum a non iusto, verum a non vero, bonum a non bono, magis bonum a minus bono. Hoc autem posse omnino inutile illi est et supervacuum, nisi quod discernit amet aut reprobet secundum verae discretionis iudicium. Hinc itaque satis patenter videtur omne rationale ad hoc existere, ut sicut ratione discretionis aliquid magis vel minus bonum sive non bonum iudicat, ita magis vel minus id amet aut respuat. Anselm returns to this theme in CDH; Book 2 Chapter 1. All

This description of the nature of man includes several critical elements. The first is that the very definition of rational is the ability to discern just and unjust actions. Indeed, for Anselm this is no binary state, he goes on to describe how individuals are also able to rank such discriminations in terms of greater and lesser goods. Lastly, he stipulates the ability to love what is good beyond what is not and what is true beyond what is false as another primary purpose for the creation of man. When this is taken in conjunction with his statement that man is an inherently rational creature, there is compelling evidence to suggest that Anselm intended his ethical theory to be universalizable (applicable to all men). This is important as it allows all men to reason that as God is the greatest good, he therefore deserves the greatest degree of love. In turn, man is able to deduce that in order to show his love for God he ought to behave appropriately, by being ethically good.

For Anselm, man must love good and just action. In the chapter of the *Monologion* which follows that cited above he equates this with loving the ‘Supreme Being’ and argues that both are important elements of the purpose of creation.

But without doubt the human soul is a rational creature. Hence, it must have been made for the purpose of loving the Supreme Being. Necessarily, then, it was made either so that it might love [this Being] endlessly or else so that it might at some time lose this love either freely or by force.³⁹

Quotations in this chapter, as specified in the introduction, are taken from Anselm of Canterbury, *Complete Philosophical and Theological Treatises of Anselm of Canterbury*, trans. J. Hopkins and H. Richardson. (Minneapolis, 2000). Emendations are indicated and made where necessary.

³⁹ Monologion Chapter 69. *Dubium autem non est humanam animam esse rationalem creaturam. Ergo necesse est eam esse factam ad hoc, ut amet summam essentiam. Necesse est igitur eam esse factam aut ad hoc ut sine fine amet, aut ad hoc ut aliquando vel sponte vel violenter hunc amorem amittat.*

It is interesting to note that Anselm includes the ability to maintain or to lose this love as a facet of free will at this point in his discussion. It provides not only an intriguing example of the coherence of Anselm's thought as a whole, but also a further example of how applicable such documents were meant to be in day to day life.

Anselm's discussion of the will accomplishes three distinct tasks. The first is establishing *that* humans have free will, the second, more generally put, *how* humans have free will, and the third *why* they have free will. The first and third are mostly covered in *De libertate* with the second mainly addressed in *De casu diaboli*. By so doing, and indeed it can be argued that this is a significant part of his broader project, he addresses elements of the problem of evil by showing that God does not cause, and is therefore not responsible for, sin.

This discussion is begun in *De libertate* by separating the notion of freedom from the ability to sin. He does this on the grounds that God cannot, by definition, sin, yet God could never be referred to as anything other than free:

[Student] For if freedom of choice consists in being able to sin and not to sin (as some persons are accustomed to say) and if we always have this ability, how is it that we sometimes need grace? But if we do not always have this ability, why is sin imputed to us when we sin without a free choice?

Teacher. I do not think that freedom of choice is the ability to sin and not to sin. Indeed, if this were its definition, then neither God nor the angels who are not able to sin would have free choice— a blasphemous thing to say.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Anselm, DL, Chapter 1 [Student] Si enim libertas arbitrii est 'posse peccare et non peccare', sicut a quibusdam solet dici, et hoc semper habemus: quomodo aliquando gratia indigemus? Si autem hoc non semper habemus: cur nobis imputatur peccatum, quando sine libero arbitrio peccamus?

MAGISTER. Libertatem arbitrii non puto esse potentiam peccandi et non peccandi. Quippe si haec eius esset definitio: nec deus nec angeli qui peccare nequeunt liberum haberent arbitrium; quod nefas est dicere.

Anselm then goes on to summarise his point succinctly, ‘In fact, the ability to sin does not constitute either freedom or a part of freedom.’⁴¹ Two chapters later the student then presses Anselm for alternative formulations of why God gave individuals freedom of choice:

T. For what end do you think they had that freedom of choice? Was it in order to obtain what they willed, or was it in order to will what they ought to will and what was advantageous for them to will?

S. To will what they ought to will and what was advantageous to will.

T. Therefore, the end for which they had freedom of choice is uprightness-of-will. For, surely, as long as they willed what they ought to have willed, they had uprightness-of-will.⁴²

The answer is: so that mankind can be held ethically responsible for their actions, virtues and vices. Before progressing to the manner in which this occurs, it is critical to note that the purpose of this freedom as defined in *De libertate* is restricted solely to the freedom in virtue of which responsibility can be assigned to the individual, as Anselm clearly states:

T. Tell me, then, whether you wish [to know] anything more about the freedom in virtue of which we hold its possessor accountable for his good and evil deeds. For our present discourse deals only with this freedom.⁴³

⁴¹ Anselm, DL, Chapter 1 Denique nec libertas nec pars libertatis est potestas peccandi.

⁴² Anselm, DL Chapter 3 MAGISTER. Ad quid tibi videntur illam habuisse libertatem arbitrii: an ad assequendum quod vellent, an ad volendum quod deberent et quod illis velle expediret?

DISCIPULUS. Ad volendum quod deberent et quod expediret velle.

MAGISTER. Ergo ad rectitudinem voluntatis habuerunt libertatem arbitrii. Quamdiu namque voluerunt quod debuerunt, rectitudinem habuerunt voluntatis.

⁴³ Anselm, DL, Chapter 13 MAGISTER. Dic ergo si quid vis amplius de libertate hac, propter quam imputatur illam habenti, sive faciat bonum sive faciat malum. De hac enim sola nunc noster est sermo.

A significant portion of this choice involves the ability to choose poorly when several options present themselves. With this in mind, the manner in which freedom of choice interacts with the two types of will is best described by an example given in *De casu diaboli*:

T. However, he is not able to be happy unless he wills happiness. I here mean by ‘happiness’ not happiness with justice but the happiness which everyone wills—even the unjust. Indeed, all will to be well-off. For leaving aside the fact that every nature is called good, we commonly speak of two goods and of two opposing evils. One good is what is called justice, whose opposing evil is injustice. The other good is what seems to me able to be called benefit, to which the opposing evil is disadvantage. But, of course, not everyone wills justice, and not everyone flees from injustice. But not only every rational nature but even everything which is able to sense wills benefit and avoids disadvantage. For no one wills [anything] except what he considers to be in some respect beneficial to himself. In this manner, then, everyone wills to be well-off, and no one wills to be badly-off. I am speaking now about this happiness because no one is able to be happy who does not will happiness. For no one can be happy either in having what he does not will or in not having what he does will.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Anselm, DCD, Chapter 12 MAGISTER. Beatus autem non potest esse, si non vult beatitudinem. Dico autem nunc beatitudinem non beatitudinem cum iustitia, sed quam volunt omnes, etiam iniusti. Omnes quippe volunt bene sibi esse. Excepto namque hoc quod omnis natura bona dicitur, duo bona et duo his contraria mala usu dicuntur. Unum bonum est quod dicitur iustitia, cui contrarium est malum iniustitia. Alterum bonum est quod mihi videtur posse dici commodum, et huic malum opponitur incommodum. Sed iustitiam quidem non omnes volunt, neque omnes fugiunt iniustitiam. Commodum vero non solum omnis rationalis natura, sed etiam omne quod sentire potest vult, et vitat incommodum. Nam nullus vult nisi quod aliquo modo sibi putat commodum. Hoc igitur modo omnes bene sibi esse volunt, et male sibi esse nolunt. De hac beatitudine nunc dico, quia nullus potest esse beatus qui non vult beatitudinem. Nullus namque beatus potest esse aut habendo quod non vult, aut non habendo quod vult.

By ensuring that happiness is contingent upon the willing of happiness, Anselm has drawn a connection between the intention and action of the individual and the happiness that will result. Moreover, he ensures that it is the role of man to ensure that he is happy. As God has given man the opportunity to be happy, the responsibility for its maintenance can only be that of the free ethical actor.

Anselm makes it clear that possessing two wills is what God intended and an essential facet of the nature of man. Indeed, to be tempted by the animalistic will is no bad thing, for all men are. It is only in succumbing to this will that man risks losing his ability to be truly free and therefore ethically good. These two wills lead to two distinct types of happiness, one higher and one lower, in conjunction with the wills they represent. This is the manner in which Anselm's statements about creation for the purpose of loving God interact with his insistence that man is equally created to be happy. The higher happiness only comes from loving God. In a sense they are inseparable. Equally, Anselm is happy to provide the corollary in typically normative terms: 'And someone who does not will justice ought not to be happy.'⁴⁵

For those animals that are not in possession of a higher will, to obey only the animalistic will does not make them ethically bad. On the contrary, they are behaving in the manner in which they were designed and created and as such are neither just nor unjust and, as such, have no true choice:

S. By like reasoning, can we not say that the will of a horse is free because it serves the appetite of the flesh only willingly?

T. No, the case of a horse is not similar. For in a horse the will does not subject itself but is naturally subjected and always serves the appetite of the flesh by necessity. However, in a man, as long as the will is upright it neither is subjected to nor serves what it ought not; and it is not turned aside from uprightness by any alien force unless it willingly consents to what it ought

⁴⁵ Anselm, DCD, Chapter 12 *Nec beatus debet esse qui non vult iustitiam.*

not. And it is clearly seen to have this consent from itself and not by nature or of necessity, as in the case of a horse.⁴⁶

In order to illustrate the mechanics of how a being with reason might choose to behave in such a fashion, Anselm describes the manner of Satan's fall. Satan, unlike the aforementioned horse, was not simply an animal. He was in full possession of both types of will and, as a result, free choice. *De casu diaboli* again provides a more full discussion, with Anselm setting forth the question in the introduction to Chapter Thirteen:

If [Satan] received only the will-for-happiness, he was able to will only happiness and was not able to keep from willing it; and regardless of what he willed, his will was neither just nor unjust.⁴⁷

His point of about the necessity of choice made, Anselm then generalizes his argument to all rational beings so that it can be seen to also apply to man.

T. If someone wills something not for the sake of the thing he is seen to will but rather for the sake of something else, should he be properly judged to will (1) that which he is said to will or (2) that for the sake of which he wills?

S. Assuredly, (2) that for the sake of which he is seen to will.

⁴⁶ Anselm, DL, Chapter 5 DISCIPULUS. Nonne simili ratione possumus dicere voluntatem equi esse liberam, quia non appetitui carnis servit nisi volens?

MAGISTER. Non hic est similiter. In equo namque non ipsa voluntas se subicit, sed naturaliter subiecta semper necessitate appetitui carnis servit; in homine vero quamdiu ipsa voluntas recta est, nec servit nec subiecta est cui non debet, nec ab ipsa rectitudine ulla vi aliena avertitur, nisi ipsa cui non debet volens consentiat; quem consensum non naturaliter nec ex necessitate sicut equus, sed ex se aperte videtur habere.

⁴⁷ Anselm, DCD, Chapter 13 Quod accepta sola voluntate beatitudinis nec aliud posset velle nec ipsam non velle; et quidquid vellet non esset iusta vel in iusta voluntas.; Anselm repeats this argument later on in the same chapter.

T. Therefore, someone who wills something for the sake of happiness does not will anything other than happiness. Therefore, he is able both to will what he thinks to be conducive to happiness and to will only happiness.⁴⁸

Therefore it is the possession of both types of happiness that leads to choice for the individual and, as such to the interplay of wills that comprises ethical concerns. As such, it is possible for Anselm to show that the bad actions of Satan were indeed unjust and not simply a product of his creation.

T. Therefore, he wills to be happy in proportion to his recognition that a greater happiness is possible.

S. Without doubt, he so wills.

T. Therefore, he wills to be like God.

S. Nothing is clearer.

T. What do you think?: Would his will be unjust if in this manner he willed to be like God?

S. I do not wish to call it just, because he would be willing what was not fitting; nor do I wish to call it unjust, because he would will of necessity.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Anselm, DCD, Chapter 13 MAGISTER. Qui vult aliquid non propter rem quam videtur velle, sed propter aliud: quid proprie iudicandus est velle, an illud quod dicitur velle, an illud propter quod vult? DISCIPULUS. Illud utique propter quod videtur velle.

MAGISTER. Qui ergo vult aliquid propter beatitudinem, non aliud vult quam beatitudinem. Quare potest et quod putat prodesse ad beatitudinem et solam beatitudinem velle.

⁴⁹ Anselm, DCD, Chapter 13 Vult ergo esse beatus quanto altius hoc esse posse cognoscit. DISCIPULUS. Procul dubio vult.

MAGISTER. Ergo vult esse similis deo.

DISCIPULUS. Nihil apertius.

MAGISTER. Quid tibi videtur: an esset iniusta voluntas, si hoc modo vellet esse similis deo?

DISCIPULUS. Nec iustam volo dicere quia vellet quod non conveniret, nec iniustam quia ex necessitate vellet.

Anselm once more contrasts this position with that of an animal to show the true distinction between a pure action and the will that drives a specific action to be just or unjust.

T. When he willed unclean and very base benefits in which irrational animals take pleasure, wouldn't this same will be unjust and blameworthy?

S. How would [that] will be unjust and blameworthy, for it would will what it had received not to be able to keep from willing?

T. However, it is evident that this will is the work of God and the gift of God (even as is life or sensibility), whether when it wills the loftiest benefits or when it wills the basest ones. And it is evident that neither justice nor injustice is in this will.

S. No doubt about it.

T. Therefore, insofar as [this will] is a being, it is something good. But as far as justice or injustice is concerned, [this will] is neither good nor evil.⁵⁰

Had Satan only been given the will to happiness, it would not be right to call him unjust as he would only have those gifts which God gave him and therefore would not be at fault for pursuing simply and only those goods. Anselm is quick to point out that Satan could not be referred to as just if he had only received the will-for-uprightness for the same reason, 'The case is similar if [Satan] received only the will-for-uprightness. And so, he received both wills at the same time in order to be both

⁵⁰ Anselm, DCD, Chapter 13 MAGISTER. Nonne cum vellet commoda infima et immunda quibus irrationalia, animalia delectantur, esset eadem voluntas iniusta et vituperabilis?

DISCIPULUS. Quomodo iniusta aut reprehendenda voluntas esset, quia vellet quod non posse non velle accepisset?

MAGISTER. Voluntatem tamen ipsam, sive cum vult summa commoda sive cum vult infima, constat esse opus et donum dei, sicut est vita aut sensibilitas, et non esse in ea iustitiam sive iniustitiam.

DISCIPULUS. Non est dubium.

MAGISTER. Ergo in quantum essentia est, bonum aliquid est; quantum vero, ad iustitiam pertinet sive iniustitiam, nec bona nec mala est.

just and happy.⁵¹ If, like the horse, there was only one way in which he could act then it would not be appropriate to provide either praise or blame for those actions. However, using the higher will to moderate the will to happiness does not require the individual to forego all types of happiness, indeed it is the only manner in which higher happiness can be attained.

T. Then, since [Satan] cannot be called just or unjust merely because he wills happiness or merely because he wills what is fitting (for he would will these of necessity), and since he neither can nor ought to be happy unless he wills to be happy and wills justly, it is necessary for God to make both wills so agree in him that he wills to be happy and wills justly. Accordingly, the addition of justice would so temper the will-for-happiness that its excesses would be checked while its power to transgress would remain unabridged. Thus, although with respect to the fact that he would will to be happy he would be able to exceed the mean, nevertheless with respect to the fact that he would will justly he would not will to exceed the mean. And so, thus possessing a just will-for-happiness he could and should be happy. And by not willing what he ought not to will, although able [to will it], he would merit never to be able to will what he ought not to will. And by always keeping justice by means of a tempered will, he would in no way experience need. But if he were to desert justice by means of an immoderate will, he would in every way experience need.⁵²

⁵¹ Anselm, DCD, Chapter 14 Quod similiter sit, si sola accepta sit voluntas rectitudinis; et idcirco utramque voluntatem simul accepit, ut et iustus et beatus esset.

⁵² Anselm, DCD, Chapter 14 Quoniam ergo nec solummodo volendo beatitudinem, nec solummodo volendo quod convenit cum ex necessitate sic velit, iustus vel iniustus potest appellari, nec potest nec debet esse beatus nisi velit et nisi iuste velit: necesse est ut sic faciat deus utramque voluntatem in illo convenire, ut et beatus esse velit et iuste velit. Quatenus addita iustitia sic temperet voluntatem beatitudinis, ut et resecet voluntatis excessum et excedendi non amputet potestatem. Ut cum per hoc quia volet beatus esse modum possit excedere, per hoc quia iuste volet non velit excedere, et sic iustam habens beatitudinis voluntatem possit et debeat esse beatus. Qui non volendo quod non debet velle cum tamen possit, mereatur ut quod velle non debet numquam velle possit, et semper tenendo

It is Satan's desertion of the balance of wills provided by God that causes his condition. More specifically it is his desire to place his own happiness in the form of benefit before happiness in the form of God's justice. This is discussed further, albeit in the context of men, in *De libertate* as a portion of the discussion of the interaction of grace and free will:

Although they had subjected themselves to sin, they were not able to destroy their natural freedom of choice. However, they were able to cause themselves no longer to be able to use this freedom without a grace different from the grace they had originally possessed.⁵³

Sinful men, having subjected themselves to sin, have deserted the grace of God and, as will be shown, require a new grace to effectively repent. Yet Anselm makes it clear that this does not mean that they lose their free choice:

T. Therefore, a rational nature always has free choice since it always has the ability to keep (although sometimes with difficulty) uprightness-of-will for the sake of uprightness itself. But when free will deserts uprightness because of the difficulty of keeping it, then, assuredly, free will subsequently serves sin because of the impossibility of recovering uprightness through its own efforts. So, then, it becomes "a wind that goes out and does not return,"⁵⁴ since "he who commits sin is the servant of sin."⁵⁵ Indeed, just as before having uprightness, no will was able to take it without God's giving it, so upon

iustitiam per moderatam voluntatem nullo modo indigeat; aut si deseruerit iustitiam per immoderatam voluntatem, omni modo indigeat.

⁵³ Anselm, DL Chapter 3 Licet peccato se subdidissent, libertatem tamen arbitrii naturalem in se interimere nequiverunt; sed facere potuerunt, ut iam non sine alia gratia quam erat illa quam prius habuerant, illa libertate uti non valeant.

⁵⁴ Psalms 77:39 (78:39).

⁵⁵ John 8:34.

deserting the uprightness which has been received, the will is unable to recover it unless God gives it again.⁵⁶

Anselm's admittance of the difficulties of staying ethically good will be important in subsequent chapters that deal with more specific ethical concerns. In the context of the above, it is clear that he is seeking to establish the conditional nature of truly good ethical action. All good things must ultimately come from God and when they are deserted man alone cannot recover them. Yet all is not lost, God can restore uprightness of will to an individual:

Moreover, I think it a greater miracle when God restores to the will the uprightness it has deserted than when He restores to a dead man the life he has lost. For in dying by necessity, the body does not sin and consequently never receive life again; but in deserting uprightness by its own efforts, the will deserves always to lack uprightness. And if someone voluntarily takes his own life, he does not remove from himself what was never going to be lost; but someone who deserts uprightness-of-will throws away that which was supposed to be kept always.⁵⁷

Man's original uprightness of will, as gifted by God, is intended to be a permanent feature of man's character. When such uprightness is lost, it takes a miraculous act

⁵⁶ Anselm, DL, Chapter 10 *Semper igitur habet rationalis natura liberum arbitrium, quia semper habet potestatem servandi rectitudinem voluntatis propter ipsam rectitudinem, quamvis aliquando cum difficultate. Sed cum libera voluntas deserit rectitudinem per difficultatem servandi, utique post servit peccato per impossibilitatem per se recuperandi. Sic ergo fit spiritus vadens et non rediens, quoniam "qui facit peccatum, servus est peccati". Quippe sicut nulla voluntas, antequam haberet rectitudinem, potuit eam deo non dante capere: ita cum deserit acceptam, non potest eam nisi deo reddente recipere.*

⁵⁷ Anselm, DL, Chapter 10 *Et maius miraculum existimo cum deus voluntati desertam reddit rectitudinem, quam cum mortuo vitam reddit amissam. Corpus enim necessitate moriendo non peccat, ut vitam numquam recipiat; voluntas vero per se rectitudinem deserendo meretur, ut illa semper indigeat. Et si quis sponte mortem sibi infert, non aufert sibi quod numquam erat amissurus; qui vero voluntatis rectitudinem deserit, hoc abicit quod ex debito semper erat servaturus.*

for it to return. The clear parallels with Anselm's Christology are no doubt intentional and it is likely that the double meaning was not lost on the monks who would have read this work.

In Chapter Fourteen of *De libertate* Anselm provides a detailed breakdown of the different types of individual and the manner in which their status with God will affect their ability to be redeemed by grace. In typical fashion, such a list extends beyond the realm of the individual man and encompasses Angels and, indeed, God. This analysis is a critical facet of Anselm's ethical thought. Not only does it establish that all rational beings are created with the opportunity for salvation, but so too it establishes that, for man, prior to death there is an opportunity for redemption.

I. There is an unoriginated freedom of choice, which was neither created by nor received from anyone else; this freedom is characteristic only of God.

II. There is a freedom of choice which was both created by and received from God; this freedom is characteristic of men and angels. However, this created or received freedom of choice either (A) does have uprightness to keep or (B) does not have uprightness to keep.

II-A. The freedom of choice which has uprightness keeps it either (1) so as to be able to lose it or (2) so as not to be able to lose it.

II-A-1. The freedom of choice which keeps uprightness so as to be able to lose it was characteristic of all angels before the good ones were confirmed and the evil ones fell; and it characterizes prior to death all those men who have this uprightness.

II-A-2. But the freedom of choice which keeps uprightness so as not to be able to lose it is characteristic of elect angels and elect men—of elect angels after the fall of the reprobate angels, and of elect men after death.

II-B. However, the freedom of choice which does not have uprightness lacks it in such way as either (1) to be able to recover it or (2) not to be able to recover it.

II-B-1. The freedom of choice which does not have uprightness and yet is able to recover it characterizes only men who lack it during their lifetime—although many might never recover it.

II-B-2. However, the freedom of choice which does not have uprightness and is not able to recover it is characteristic of reprobate angels and men—of reprobate angels after their fall and of reprobate men after their lifetime.⁵⁸

Man must possess freedom of choice and that freedom of choice must be given by God. Were man not given such a choice, God himself would be unjust in judging whether or not man had been ethically good, a subject to which Anselm devotes a great deal of space in *De casu diaboli*. Man then, has a choice whether or not to accept God's grace and, if he does, whether or not to maintain that grace through uprightness of will. Some men will succeed and some will clearly fail, but the important point is that all are granted the appropriate opportunity to do so.

The most intriguing thing about this list is that Anselm categorizes fallen men as only fallen after their lifetime. Quite literally every human is given the opportunity, necessarily to receive God's grace and redeem themselves in order to be ethically good. Given the difficulties incumbent upon the individual to remain ethical (which

⁵⁸ Anselm, DL, Chapter 14 *Libertas arbitrii alia est a se; quae nec facta est nec ab alio accepta, quae est solius dei; alia a deo facta et accepta, quae est angelorum et hominum. Facta autem sive accepta alia est habens rectitudinem quam servet, alia caret. Habens alia tenet separabiliter, alia inseparabiliter. Illa quidem quae separabiliter tenet, fuit angelorum omnium, antequam boni confirmarentur et mali caderent; et est omnium hominum ante mortem, qui habent eandem rectitudinem. Quae vero tenet inseparabiliter, est electorum angelorum et hominum. Sed angelorum post ruinam reprobatorum, et hominum post mortem suam. Illa autem quae caret rectitudine, alia caret recuperabiliter, alia irrecuperabiliter. Quae recuperabiliter caret, est tantum in hac vita omnium hominum illa carentium, quamvis illam multi non recuperent. Quae autem irrecuperabiliter caret, est reprobatorum angelorum et hominum; sed angelorum post ruinam, et hominum post hanc vitam.*

will be discussed in detail in the next chapter) this is a surprisingly optimistic standpoint. He also makes the opposite point perfectly clear, those who are ethically good are also judged to be so after their lifetime and, as such are forced to show the quality through the strength of their will. It must be emphasized that there is a critical distinction between individuals who display appropriate uprightness of will and those who are temporally good in terms of how their fellow man might judge them.⁵⁹ Although being truly ethically good will always involve uprightness of will, the only one who can suitably judge whether the will has been upright is God. Indeed, it is perfectly possible for a man to seem to have an upright will, but for his motivations to be such that he is behaving in an ethically bad fashion before the eyes of God.

For the purposes of the current study, grace is something of a fraught subject. On the one hand, Anselm is quite clear that man must receive grace in order for ethical action to be truly good. On the other hand, he makes it equally clear that man cannot know whether or not he has received grace from God. The end result is that man must operate under the assumption that if he is ethically good in a temporal sense and fulfils the devotional aspects of his life to the best of his ability, then he will receive God's grace. Although he will necessarily sometimes be wrong, to assume the opposite would mean that he would always be wrong and his actions would never be ethically good. It is this line of logic that leads to the value of temporal discussions about the manner in which man can be ethically good.

This was clearly a matter of much discussion amongst the monks Anselm taught. He writes Boso as saying in *Cur deus homo*:

⁵⁹ This concept will be further explored in the chapters on ethics of intent and virtue ethics.

Moreover, you ought to expect of God's grace that if you willingly share those things which you have freely received, you will merit the receiving of the higher things to which you have not yet attained.⁶⁰

This is not quite the view that Anselm would tend to espouse, his most effective summary coming in *De Concordia*:

Yet, in regard to those passages in which Scripture is seen to invite free choice to right-willing and right-working, people wonder why it invites a man to will rightly and why it condemns him if he is disobedient, seeing that no one can have or receive uprightness unless grace bestows it. We must note [the following comparison]: Without any cultivation on man's part the earth produces countless herbs and trees by which human beings are not nourished or by which they are even killed. But those herbs and trees which are especially necessary to us for nourishing our lives are not produced by the earth apart from seeds and great labor and a farmer. Similarly, without learning and endeavor human hearts freely germinate, so to speak, thoughts and volitions which are not conducive to salvation or which are even harmful thereto. But without their own kind of seed and without laborious cultivation human hearts do not at all conceive and germinate those thoughts and volitions without which we do not make progress toward our soul's salvation.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Anselm, CDH, Book 1, Chapter 1 ... et sperare de gratia dei quia, si ea quae gratis accepisti libenter impertiris, altiora ad quae nondum attigisti mereberis accipere.

⁶¹ Anselm, DC, Book III, Chapter 6 In his tamen in quibus videtur scriptura liberum arbitrium ad recte volendum et operandum invitare, quaeritur cur hominem invitat ad recte volendum, et quare arguit non oboedientem, cum ipsam rectitudinem nemo possit nisi gratia dante habere vel accipere. Sciendum quia, sicut terra innumerabiles herbas et arbores, sine quibus humana natura alitur aut etiam quibus perimitur, sine omni hominis cura profert, illas vero, quae nobis ad vitam nutriendam maxime sunt necessariae, non sine magno labore atque cultore nec absque seminibus: ita corda humana sine doctrina, sine studio sponte quasi germinant cogitationes et voluntates nihil utiles

This argument is encapsulated by Anselm's analogy of a farmer planting his field. Grace, according to Anselm, is like seeds falling from heaven. If the farmer has ploughed his field and carefully kept the soil in peak condition then the seeds are more likely to take root. Indeed, if the farmer continues to water and weed, his crop will be substantial. On the other hand, in the natural state of the land it is true that single seeds may take root and grow, however, it is far less likely that a crop will come to fruit and that the land will flourish when it is left unattended and without appropriate care. In terms of our broader discussion, this provides a useful example, not only of Anselm's characteristic shifts between the temporal and the eternal, but also a compelling argument in favour of ethically good action irrespective of whether man can be assured a place amongst the elect.

Anselm encompasses two basic forms of grace in his discussions about the topic. On the one hand there is grace that only occurs in relation to a specific action. If an individual is trying to achieve a specific aim, God can manipulate grace in order to aid that endeavour. More broadly, Anselm also conceives of a wide-ranging grace that is available to, and showered upon, all of creation.

It is difficult to overstate the importance of truth in Anselm's philosophy. In essence God is Truth and, as such, is suffused into every aspect of life. Although this chapter is almost exclusively interested in Anselm's conception of truth as it pertains to action, it will be worth a brief review of some of the other forms that appear in *De veritate* as these impact upon how an individual views situations in which ethical actions are required.

For Anselm, truth can be derived by the individual in two distinct ways. Firstly, it can be derived through reason. Anselm briefly states in chapter eleven, 'Therefore,

saluti aut etiam noxias, illas vero, sine quibus ad salutem animae non proficimus, nequaquam sine sui generis semine et laboriosa cultura concipiunt aut germinant.

unless I am mistaken we can define ‘truth’ as ‘rightness perceptible only to the mind.’⁶² Before expanding this more fully in chapter twelve:

Therefore, if justice is nothing other than rightness, you have the definition of ‘justice.’ And since we are speaking about the rightness which is perceptible only to the mind—‘truth,’ ‘rightness,’ and ‘justice’ are definable in terms of one another. As a result, if someone knows what one of them is but does not know what the other two are, he can infer from his knowledge of one to a knowledge of the others. In fact, if anyone knows one of them, he cannot keep from knowing the other two.⁶³

He had foreshadowed such a position several years before in the *Monologion*, showing the clarity of his views throughout his corpus and lifetime.

Therefore, since this Nature is in no respect composite and yet is in every respect those very many goods [listed above], all those goods must be one rather than many. Hence, each one of them is the same as all [the others]—whether they be considered distinctly or all together.⁶⁴

So too are these concepts self-evident goods, along with several other properties of being.

Indeed, whatever is not-wise is, insofar as it is not wise, unqualifiedly inferior to what is wise; for whatever is not wise would be better if it were wise. Similarly, true is in every respect better than not-itself, i.e., than not-true; and

⁶²Anselm, DV, Chapter 11 Possumus igitur, nisi fallor, definire quia veritas est rectitudo mente sola perceptibilis.

⁶³Anselm, DV, Chapter 12 Habes igitur definitionem iustitiae, si iustitia non est aliud quam rectitudo. Et quoniam de rectitudine mente sola perceptibili loquimur, invicem sese definiunt veritas et rectitudo et iustitia. Ut qui unam earum noverit et alias nescierit, per notam ad ignotarum scientiam pertingere possit; immo qui noverit unam, alias nescire non possit.

⁶⁴Anselm, *Monologion*, Chapter 17 Cum igitur illa natura nullo modo composita sit, et tamen omnimodo tot illa bona sit, necesse est ut illa omnia non plura, sed unum sint. Idem igitur est quodlibet unum eorum quod omnia, sive simul sive singula.

just [is in every respect better] than not-just; and lives [is in every respect better] than not-lives.⁶⁵

This provides an early demonstration of Anselm's anti-consequentialism as, by the same logic (and backed up in Anselm's own words in Ep. 311) being ethically good is always better than being ethically not good, irrespective of the long term effect. This is finalized with a definitive statement that all such self-evident goods are the same good, namely God, 'Consequently, the same [conclusion] holds with regard to the Supreme Nature, because the Supreme Nature is the Supreme Truth.'⁶⁶

Truth seems to be self-evident if reason is applied and so, to Anselm, should be logically consistent. From this, it can be concluded that Anselm would expect most, if not all, individuals to be capable of arriving at the truth without education or interference. This becomes important in terms of his discussion of just action. When he discusses just actions, he modifies this to state that a rational nature is needed. As he states in chapter twelve, 'Therefore, since all justice is rightness, the justice which makes the one who keeps it worthy of praise is present only in rational natures.'⁶⁷ Regrettably Anselm neglects to discuss potential situations in which a rational nature is not present, although, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter, it is conceivable that he would have no longer considered them human as reason was an identifying feature of humanity.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Anselm, Monologion, Chapter 15 *Omne quippe non sapiens simpliciter, inquantum non sapiens est, minus est quam sapiens; quia omne non sapiens melius esset, si esset sapiens. Similiter omnino melius est verum quam non ipsum, id est quam non verum; et iustum quam non iustum; et vivit quam non vivit.*

⁶⁶ Anselm, Monologion, Chapter 18 *Quare idem sequitur de summa natura, quia ipsa summa veritas est.*

⁶⁷ Anselm, DV, Chapter 12 *Ergo quoniam omnis iustitia est rectitudo, nullatenus est iustitia quae servantem se facit laudabilem, nisi in rationalibus.*

⁶⁸ Such an omission is less surprising than it would be in many other thinkers. Anselm lived and worked in a monastic environment predominantly composed of adult men. Such children as were to be found were being educated or initiated. It is quite conceivable that, in any case, Anselm would

Yet truth can also be arrived at empirically, as the senses do not lie. This second understanding of Truth can, and at times, must be modified by the first. Anselm provides the example of a straight stick that is standing upright in water:

Similarly, when an unbroken stick, partly in water, partly not, is thought to be broken, or when we think that our sight sees our real faces in a mirror, and when sight and the other senses seem to report to us many things as being other than they really are— the fault is not with the senses, which report what they are able to, since they have received thus to be able; rather, [the fault] must be attributed to the soul's judgment, which does not clearly discern what the senses can and ought to do. I do not think that time need be spent in showing this [in any more detail], since for our purposes it would be more tedious than profitable. Let it suffice to say only that whatever the senses are seen to report, whether they do so as a result of their nature or of some other cause [for example, because of a tinted glass], they do what they ought. Therefore, they do what is right and true, and their truth falls within the classification of truth in actions.⁶⁹

To the observer the stick appears bent and yet when reason is applied, the observer understands that the stick is straight and that the water is simply refracting the light to make it appear bent. This has a very interesting implication, namely that reality and the information provided by the senses are not always the same, critically then, reason must play a strong role in ethical behaviour. A simple perception, or emotive

have ascribed fault in such borderline cases to an insufficient will as opposed to an insufficient operation or capacity for reason. Anselm may have avoided an extended discussion as such scenarios prove problematic with his contention that reason is a fundamental facet of man.

⁶⁹ Anselm, DV Chapter 6 *Similiter cum fustis integer, cuius pars est intra aquam et pars extra, putatur fractus; aut cum putamus quod visus noster vultus nostros inveniat in speculo; et cum multa alia nobis aliter videntur visus et alii sensus nuntiare quam sint: non culpa sensuum est qui renuntiant quod possunt, quoniam ita posse acceperunt, sed iudicio animae imputandum est, quod non bene discernit quid illi possint aut quid debeant. Quod ostendere quoniam laboriosum magis est quam fructuosum ad hoc quod intendimus, in hoc modo tempus insumendum non arbitror. Hoc tantum sufficiat dicere quia sensus, quidquid renuntiare videantur, sive ex sui natura hoc faciant sive ex alia aliqua causa: hoc faciunt quod debent, et ideo rectitudinem et veritatem faciunt; et continetur haec veritas sub illa veritate, quae est in actione.*

response of what is right and wrong, may, under closer scrutiny and the application of reason turn out to be incorrect or misleading and thus a poor choice of action.

It is reasonable then, and indeed can be born out repeatedly by references in his letters to assume that Anselm wishes individuals to see truth in both lights. They must apply reason to the world around them in order to understand as best they can, but so too must they trust experience and the experience of others. In essence it is the truth, to which all have access, compared with the wisdom that comes with age. This discussion has broader implications upon Anselm's views of how possible epistemological certainty is, a matter that will be discussed further in the chapter on obedience.

It is critical for Anselm, in order to maintain a coherent standpoint between his philosophy and theology to establish the eternal nature of truth using more than authority. He does so in typical fashion in the *Monologion*.

Indeed, suppose that truth had had a beginning, or suppose that it would at some time come to an end: then even before truth had begun to be, it would have been true that there was no truth; and even after truth had come to an end, it would still be true that there would no longer be truth. But it could not be true without truth. Hence, there would have been truth before truth came to be, and there would still be truth after truth had ceased to be.⁷⁰

As such, truth belongs to the eternal and so too, as was discussed in the last section, must just action as it is definable by truth. Man is temporal and God eternal, but as man can decipher truth and God is truth, truth and therefore just action provides a pathway between the temporal and eternal upon which man may travel. It is this

⁷⁰ Anselm, *Monologion* Chapter Eighteen P. 30 Denique si veritas habuit principium vel habebit finem: antequam ipsa inciperet, verum erat tunc quia non erat veritas; et postquam finita erit, verum erit tunc quia non erit veritas. Atqui verum non potest esse sine veritate. Erat igitur veritas, antequam esset veritas; et erit veritas, postquam finita erit veritas; quod inconvenientissimum est.

very journey that makes ethical, and indeed normative, philosophy a relevant topic and which will be discussed further in the following chapter on teleology.

The Truth then, to Anselm is available to all men, as he points out not only in his philosophical writings, but in his meditations as well.

Surely, Truth deceives no one; someone deceives himself if he does not know the truth, if he does not believe it. He deceives himself if, seeing the truth, he hates it or despises it; thus, Truth deceives no one...

...Surely, just as Truth deceives no one, so it does not intend that anyone deceive himself, (even though we do say that Truth intends this when Truth permits it to occur)...

...Although Truth does not manifest itself to everyone, it does not withhold itself from anyone.⁷¹

As previously mentioned, Anselm also believes that reason is available to all men. The combination of reason and the ability to discern truth enables all men to know which actions are ethically good and to examine their own motivations accordingly. This is critical to God not being the cause of good ethical action or evil, Anselm here shows that it must be self – deception. Such a statement also provides the basis of the necessity for all men to be both ethically responsible and ethically culpable for their own actions.

As Anselm stipulates in the Monologion, justice is a consistent concept, to be treated as such in all things.

For example, whatever things are said to be just in relation to one another—whether [they are said to be] equally [just] or [whether some are said to be]

⁷¹ Anselm, *Meditatio Redemptionis Humanae*.

more just and [others] less just—can be understood to be just only through justice, which is not something different in [these] different things.⁷²

Justice then, is true and right action.⁷³ Importantly, knowledge of what the just action would be, or even completing the correct action, is not enough for the ethical agent to be just or good. As Anselm tells us in chapter twelve: ‘Therefore, this justice is not rightness of knowledge or rightness of action but is rightness of will.’⁷⁴ For Anselm, the ethical agent must will that action to occur and desire to keep that will for the right reasons for it to be a true or good action. This is a repeated theme that is developed initially in chapter nine of *De veritate*, but not completely espoused until chapters twelve, thirteen, and fourteen. Chapter nine provides a particularly interesting practical example, although it fails to address the underlying reasoning:

So, then, if you did not know that one should not lie, and if someone lied in your presence, then even were he to say to you that he ought not to lie, his telling you by his deed that he ought to lie would outweigh his telling you by his word that he ought not to lie. Similarly, when someone thinks or wills something: if you did not know whether he ought to think or will it, then if you could see his thought and will, by his act of thinking and of willing he would signify to you that he ought to think and will this thing. Now if, [ethically speaking], this person ought [to be thinking and willing this, then by his thinking and willing] he would be telling the truth; and if, [ethically speaking], he ought not [to be thinking and willing this], then he would be lying.⁷⁵

⁷² Anselm, Monologion, Chapter 1 Nam quaecumque iusta dicuntur ad invicem sive pariter sive magis vel minus, non possunt intelligi iusta nisi per iustitiam, quae non est aliud et aliud in diversis.

⁷³ Remembering chapter nine, “‘truth,” “rightness,” and “justice” are definable in terms of one another.’ Anselm, DV, Chapter 9.

⁷⁴ Anselm, DV, Chapter 12 Ergo non est ista iustitia rectitudo scientiae aut rectitudo actionis, sed rectitudo voluntatis.

⁷⁵ Anselm, DV, Chapter 9 Sic itaque si nescires non esse mentiendum et mentiretur aliquis coram te: etiam si tibi diceret ipse non se debere mentiri, plus ipse tibi diceret opere se mentiri debere quam verbo non debere. Similiter cum cogitat aliquis aut vult aliquid, si nescires an deberet id velle

This passage is intriguing on several counts. The first is that it relates a specific ethical harm to the universalisable discernibility of good and bad ethical actions. Although more common in his letter collection, Anselm provides such examples to, once more, tie the eternal nature of sin to the temporal nature of good ethical action. The second interesting element, is that the quotation displays a deep-seated belief that bad ethical action occurs when individuals are aware that they are doing the wrong thing, a constant theme throughout Anselm's letter collection.

In *De libertate* Anselm revisits this example and in doing so raises the stakes. This time the man who has the option to lie has a knife to his throat and is informed that if he does not lie he will be killed. Anselm argues that the man is still free in that he cannot be forced to surrender his uprightness-of-will, nor can he be forced to take a single course of action. Instead, whichever course of action he takes; it is the course of action he wills. Allowances are made for the fact that the man may be swayed by a desire to stay alive as opposed to lying for the sake of lying itself. As such, two types of will may be said to exist in the scenario, a will to something for its own sake and a will to do something for the sake of a differing consequence.

T. Perhaps he is said to lie against his will because when he so wills the truth that he does not lie except for the sake of his life, then he both wills the lie for the sake of his life and does not will it for its own sake (since he wills the truth). Thus, he lies both willingly and. unwillingly. For the will by which we will something for its own sake (as when we will health for its own sake) is different from the will by which we will a thing for the sake of something else (as when we will to drink absinthe for the sake of health). Therefore, perhaps it can be said that the man lies both against his will and not against his will, in accordance with these different wills. Accordingly, when the man is said to lie

sive cogitare: si voluntatem eius et cogitationem videres, significaret tibi ipso opere quia hoc deberet cogitare et velle. Quod si ita deberet, verum diceret. Sin autem, mentiretur.

against his will because insofar as he wills the truth he does not will to lie, this statement does not contradict my claim that no one deserts uprightness-of-will against his will. For in lying, the man wills to desert uprightness for the sake of his life; and in accordance with this will he deserts uprightness not against his will but willingly. This is the will we are now discussing, for we are speaking about the will by which a man wills to lie for the sake of his life rather than about the will by which he does not will the lie for its own sake. On the other hand, he surely does lie against his will, in that against his will he either-lies-or-is-killed (i.e., against his will he is in a predicament in which, necessarily, one or the other of these happens). For although it is necessary that he either-lie-or-be-killed, it is not necessary that he be killed, because he can avoid being killed if he lies. And it is not necessary that he lie, because he can avoid lying if he [lets himself] be killed. For neither alternative is determined necessarily, because both are in his power. So, too, although against his will he either-lies-or-is-killed, it does not follow that he lies-against-his-will or that he is-killed-against-his-will.⁷⁶

The language that Anselm employs makes it quite clear that he feels that the individual ought not to lie. Indeed, for Anselm both the individual wielding the

⁷⁶ Anselm, DL, Chapter 5 Ideo forsitan invitus mentiri dicitur, quia cum sic vult veritatem ut non mentiatur nisi propter vitam: et vult mendacium quia propter vitam, et non vult mendacium propter ipsum mendacium, quoniam vult veritatem; et ideo volens et nolens mentitur. Alia namque est voluntas qua volumus aliquid propter se, ut cum volumus salutem propter se; et alia cum aliquid volumus propter aliud, ut cum volumus bibere absinthium propter salutem. Unde potest forsitan dici secundum has diversas voluntates, quia invitus et non invitus mentitur. Quapropter cum dicitur invitus mentiri, quia non id vult, inquantum vult veritatem: non repugnat illi sententiae qua dico neminem invitum deserere rectitudinem voluntatis; quia mentiendo vult eam deserere propter vitam, secundum quam voluntatem non invitus eam deserit sed volens, de qua voluntate nunc loquimur. De illa namque loquimur qua vult mentiri propter vitam, non de illa qua non vult mendacium propter se. Aut idcirco certe mentitur invitus, quia invitus aut occiditur aut mentitur, id est: invitus est in hac angustia, ut ex necessitate unum horum quodlibet fiat. Quamvis enim necesse sit illum aut occidi aut mentiri, non tamen necesse est illum occidi, quia potest non occidi si mentitur; nec necesse est illum mentiri, quia potest non mentiri si occiditur. Neutrum enim est determinate in necessitate, quia utrumlibet est in potestate. Ita quoque licet invitus aut mentiatur aut occidatur, non tamen ideo consequitur ut invitus mentiatur aut ut invitus occidatur.

knife and the individual lying have committed a very similar mechanistic act in willing to desert uprightness of will for its own sake. Indeed, this case is a prime example of man wishing to will the happiness of benefit for the self at the expense of the happiness of God's justice.

There is another reason—one contained in common usage—why someone is said to do against his will and unwillingly and of necessity that which nevertheless, he does willingly. For that which we are able to do only with difficulty and hence refrain from doing, we say that we are not able to do and that we give up of necessity and against our wills. And that which we are not able to cease doing without difficulty and hence continue to do, we say that we are doing against our wills and unwillingly and of necessity. In this manner, then, someone who lies in order not to die is said to lie against his will and unwillingly and of necessity, because he is not able to avoid the lie without incurring the hardship of death. Therefore, just as someone who lies for the sake of his life is improperly said to lie against his will (since he lies willingly), so he is improperly said to will to lie against his will (since only willingly does he will to lie). For just as when he lies he wills that he lie, so when he wills to lie he wills that he will.⁷⁷

Anselm's purpose behind his discussion of common usage extends beyond grammatical concerns. By integrating his philosophical views with everyday speech

⁷⁷ Anselm, DL, Chapter 5 *Est et alia ratio quam frequens habet usus, cur invitus et nolens et ex necessitate dicitur aliquis facere, quod tamen volens facit. Nam quod non nisi difficile facere valemus et ideo non facimus, dicimus nos hoc facere non posse et necessitate nos sive invitos deserere. Et quod sine difficultate dimittere nequimus et idcirco facimus, hoc nos invitos et nolentes et ex necessitate facere asserimus. Hoc igitur modo qui mentitur ne moriatur, mentiri invitus et nolens dicitur et ex necessitate; quia mendacium vitare non valet sine mortis difficultate. Sicut igitur qui mentitur propter vitam, improprie dicitur invitus mentiri, quoniam mentitur volens: ita non proprie dicitur invitus velle mentiri, quoniam hoc non nisi volens vult. Nam sicut cum mentitur, vult ipsum mentiri: sic cum vult mentiri, vult ipsum velle.*

acts he is showing how normative he intends his philosophy to be and once more placing the ethical responsibility on the individual and away from God

In *De casu diaboli* this is extended based on capacity to accomplish, a theme to which Anselm returns in his letters:

T. I think that you also now know — since injustice is only the absence of justice, and being unjust is simply not having justice — why after justice has been deserted, rather than before justice has been given, (1) the absence of justice is called injustice, and (2) not to have justice is to be unjust, and (3) the absence of justice and not having justice are blameworthy. The only reason is that it is not unfitting for justice to be absent except where it ought to be present. For even as not having a beard is not unbecoming for a man who ought not yet to have one, though when the time comes for him to have a beard, his not having one is unseemly: so too not having justice does not mar a nature which ought not to have it, though not having justice does disgrace a nature which ought to have it. And the more the fact that one ought to have [a beard] manifests a manly nature, the more not having [a beard] blemishes a manly appearance.⁷⁸

It will become clear when Anselm's letters are discussed that his ethical theory is contingent upon the concept of the ability of the individual. In the example presented above, he gives an intuitive illustration of just this point. For an individual incapable of beard growth it would be foolish to claim that they ought to have a

⁷⁸Anselm, DCD, Chapter 16 Aestimo etiam iam te cognoscere, cum iniustitia non sit aliud quam absentia iustitiae, nec iniustum esse aliud quam non habere iustitiam: cur non ante datam sed post derelictam iustitiam eadem absentia iustitiae vocetur iniustitia, et non habere iustitiam sit iniustum esse, et sit utrumque reprehensibile. Non enim propter aliud nisi quia non dedecet abesse iustitiam, nisi ubi debet esse. Sicut enim virum qui nondum debet habere barbam non dedecet non habere, cum vero iam habere debet indecorum est non habere: ita naturam quae non debet habere iustitiam non deformat non habere, illam vero quae habere debet dehonestat non habere; et quanto magis debere habere virilem ostendit naturam, tanto magis non habere foedat virilem figuram.

beard, however, in the instance of a monk capable of fulfilling this monastic rule, the refusal to do so would show an intent to be other than as they ought to be.

Chapters twelve, thirteen, and fourteen of *De veritate* contain the key underpinning of Anselm's ethical philosophy. Each describe what he says so succinctly in chapter twelve, that, 'Therefore, this justice is not rightness of knowledge or rightness of action but is rightness of will.'⁷⁹ Although temporal actions are important as factors comprising the ethical good, they are subordinate to, and dependent upon, the will behaving in an appropriate manner. Yet even the will can be split into two constituent parts: what is willed and why it is willed. As Anselm sets forth in chapter twelve:

Even as every will wills something, so it also wills for the sake of something. And just as we must consider what it wills, so we must also notice why it wills. For a will ought to be upright in willing what it ought and, no less, in willing for the reason it ought. Therefore, every will has both a what and a why. Indeed, whatsoever we will, we will for a reason.⁸⁰

Clearly what a man wills is critical as it determines his eventual action. More important to Anselm is why he wills and it is this next passage from chapter twelve that provides the very essence of Anselmian ethics.

Now, as regards the word 'kept,' someone will perhaps say: If uprightness-of-will is to be called justice only when it is kept, then uprightness-of-will is not justice from the moment this uprightness is possessed; and we do not receive justice when we receive uprightness-of-will, but we make this uprightness

⁷⁹ Anselm, DV, Chapter 12 Ergo non est ista iustitia rectitudo scientiae aut rectitudo actionis, sed rectitudo voluntatis.

⁸⁰ Anselm, DV, Chapter 12 Omnis voluntas sicut vult aliquid, ita vult propter aliquid. Nam quemadmodum considerandum est quid velit, sic videndum est cur velit. Quippe non magis recta debet esse volendo quod debet, quam volendo propter quod debet. Quapropter omnis voluntas habet quid et cur. Omnino namque nihil volumus, nisi sit cur velimus.

become justice by keeping it. For we receive and have uprightness-of-will before we keep it. We do not receive it and have it for the first time because we keep it, but we begin to keep it because we have received it and already have it.⁸¹

The right reasons are extremely limited. It is not sufficient for an expectation of the outcome to be good. For Anselm this represents a form of compulsion and therefore is an outside influence upon the process. Rather, the action must be willed specifically because willing the action is the right thing to do. In addition, he felt that the only legitimate reason for true and good action is out of a desire for true and good action, or, as Hopkins translates it, 'uprightness of will'.

Anselm goes on to clarify why it is bad for uprightness of will not to be maintained for its own sake. When a will is not kept upright for the sake of truth, God being truth, man is usurping from God the power and authority of what is right, by saying that man knows better than God.

Furthermore, the one who was going to assume a human nature was going to come in order to war against the Devil and to intercede, as I have said, on behalf of man. Now, by an act of robbery both the Devil and man willed to make themselves like unto God when they exercised an autonomous will. And because by an act of robbery they [thus] willed, they willed only by falsehood, inasmuch as they could only [thus] have willed unjustly. Now, the will of an angel or of a man is autonomous when it wills contrary to the will of God. For when someone wills that which God forbids him to will, he has no author of his will except himself; so his will is autonomous. Now, even

⁸¹ Anselm, DV, Chapter 12 Quod autem 'servata' dicitur, forte dicet aliquis: Si rectitudo voluntatis non nisi cum servatur dicenda est iustitia: non mox ut habetur est iustitia, nec accipimus iustitiam cum illam accipimus, sed nos servando facimus eam esse iustitiam. Nam prius illam accipimus et habemus quam servemus. Non enim ideo illam accipimus nec idcirco illam primitus habemus quia servamus; sed ideo incipimus illam servare quia accepimus et habemus.

though a man might at some time submit his will to the will of another man, still this willing is autonomous if it is in opposition to God. For he only submits his will in order to obtain something that he wants, and thus he himself is the author of the reason why he submits his will to another will. Hence, his will is an autonomous will and is not [in one sense] submitted to another will. Yet, it is the prerogative of God alone to have an autonomous will—i.e., a will which is subject to no other will. Therefore, whoever else exercises an autonomous will tries to attain unto the likeness of God by an act of robbery, and is convicted of depriving (as far as it lies in his power to do so) God of His proper dignity and unique excellence. For if there were another will which were subject to no other will, then the will of God would not be superior to all other wills, nor would it be alone that will which no other will excels.⁸²

As the purpose of man is to show God love by striving to make his will adhere to God's perfectly, any conscious violation of such a principle constitutes man turning away from God's truth and placing their own on an equal or higher footing. By so doing, they are usurping a will greater than their own. In essence, whenever man is ethically bad, he is committing the same sin that the devil is here explained to have committed.

⁸² Anselm, EIV, Chapter 10 Amplius. Qui hominem erat assumpturus, venturus erat ad pugnandum contra diabolum et ad intercedendum, sicut dixi, pro homine. Qui ambo, diabolus scilicet et homo, per rapinam se voluerunt facere similes deo, cum propria sunt usi voluntate. Et quia per rapinam voluerunt, non nisi per falsitatem, quoniam non nisi iniuste potuerunt. Propria enim voluntas angeli sive hominis est, quae contra voluntatem dei est. Cum enim vult aliquis quod deus velle prohibet, nullum habet auctorem suae voluntatis nisi se ipsum; et ideo sua propria est. Nam quamvis homo voluntatem suam aliquando subdat voluntati alterius hominis, propria tamen est si contra deum est; quoniam non eam subdit nisi ut ad aliquid quod vult attingat, et idcirco se ipsum habet auctorem cur eam alii subdat. Quapropter propria voluntas est, quae nulli est alii subdita. Solius autem dei est propriam habere voluntatem, id est quae nulli subdita sit. Quicumque igitur propria voluntate utitur, ad similitudinem dei per rapinam nititur et deum propria dignitate et singulari excellentia privare, quantum in ipso est, convincitur. Si enim est alia aliqua voluntas quae nulli subdita sit, non erit voluntas dei omnibus praelata, nec erit sola cui nulla alia praesit.

The pragmatic aspects of man acting in an ethical fashion in order to avoid such sin are amongst the most interesting elements of his ethical philosophy. Anselm has already made two critical distinctions in chapter eight of *De veritate* that provide a glimpse of this interaction. The first is the distinction between an action that is done by a ethical agent and an action that occurs to a ethical agent.

So the same thing both ought and ought not to be. It ought to be since it is permitted wisely and well by God, without whose permission it could not have happened. Yet, with respect to him by whose evil will it is committed, it ought not to be. In this way, then, the Lord Jesus ought not to have undergone death because He alone [among men] was innocent; and no one ought to have inflicted death upon Him; nevertheless, He ought to have undergone death because He wisely and graciously and usefully willed to undergo it. For in many ways the same thing admits in different respects of opposites. This is frequently the case in regard to an action—for instance, a beating. For “beating” is predicable both of one who gives it [i.e., of an agent] and of one who gets it [i.e., of a patient]. Hence, [in different respects] it can be called both an action and a passion.⁸³

Once more we see Anselm link the temporal and eternal. This example is of particular note, as it displays a bad ethical action having a positive effect. Namely, it was wrong for Jesus to be crucified, yet the fact that he was, and therefore sacrificed himself for the greater good of man, was beneficial.

⁸³ Anselm, DV, Chapter 8 Idem igitur debet esse et non esse. Debet enim esse, quia bene et sapienter ab eo, quo non permittente fieri non posset permittitur; et non debet esse quantum ad illum cuius iniqua voluntate concipitur. Hoc igitur modo dominus IESUS, quia solus innocens erat, non debuit mortem pati, nec ullus eam illi debuit inferre; et tamen debuit eam pati, quia ipse sapienter et benigne et utiliter voluit eam sufferre. Multis enim modis eadem res suscipit diversis considerationibus contraria. Quod in actione saepe contingit, ut in percussione. Percussio namque et agentis est et patientis. Unde et actio dici potest et passio. Quamvis secundum ipsum nomen actio vel percussio et quae similiter dicta a passivis in activa significatione dicuntur, magis videantur esse patientis quam agentis.

Equally, the opposite can be the case. An action can be just on behalf of the ethical agent that commits that action and yet unjust towards the ethical agent to whom the act is directed. For Anselm this distinction is critical as it allows him to dispense with the problem of evil to some degree. It also indicates that, to Anselm, the reasons for a ethical action are more important than the consequences that it causes. Anselm provides further detail, showing each possibility in turn.

Therefore, (1) when the one who gives a beating does so rightly and the one who gets that beating does so rightly—for example, when a sinner is corrected by someone whose prerogative it is—both aspects of the action are right because in both respects a beating ought to be. And (2) when, on the contrary, a just man is beaten by an unjust man, neither aspect of the action is right because the just man ought not to get a beating nor ought the unjust man to give a beating, for in neither respect ought a beating to occur.⁸⁴

Such a division remains a critical aspect of Anselm's ethical thought and it is a theme we shall be returning to when we examine his letter collection. Although this passage is probably one of the least controversial aspects of his ethical philosophy, the division is necessary for his scheme as a whole. Without intending to violate the historical accuracy of the text, it is remarkable to note how such a division saves him from many of the philosophical pitfalls that plagued medieval philosophy as a whole. Most importantly, it sets up his next clarification:

But (3) when a sinner is beaten by one whose prerogative it is not, then a beating both ought and ought not to be, since the sinner ought to get a

⁸⁴ Anselm, DV, Chapter 8 *Cum ergo et qui percutit recte percutit, et qui percutitur recte percutitur, ut cum peccans ab eo ad quem pertinet corrigitur: ex utraque parte recta est, quia ex utraque parte debet esse percussio. E contrario quando iustus ab iniquo percutitur: quia nec iste percuti nec ille percutere debet, ex utraque parte non recta est, quia ex neutra parte debet esse percussio.*

beating but the other man ought not to give a beating; and so the action cannot be denied to be both right and not right.⁸⁵

Seemingly, Anselm displays a surprising and uncharacteristic amount of pragmatism in this passage. An action may be ethically wrong and its intended outcome may be ethically wrong, yet the end result can still be positive. This separation of the outcome from the intention and action allows a great degree of ambiguity in day to day scenarios. Once more Anselm returns to a conception of epistemological uncertainty, a position that will be examined further in the following chapters. It also provides a key philosophical underpinning for later discussions of Anselm's ethics of intent.

In addition this passage presents enormous political implications that Anselm addresses poorly or not at all, though these will be discussed at length in a subsequent chapter. From a strictly ethical perspective, it allows Anselm to provide an incredibly normative statement about the value of performing in a fashion that the individual believes to be ethically good. The outcome of such an action becomes less significant as, if an individual is ethically good, their actions will have been performed for the right reasons and at worst will be both good and bad.

But if you consider whether in accordance with the judgment of Supernal Wisdom and Goodness there ought not to be a beating in the one respect only or in both respects (viz., with respect to the agent and with respect to the patient), would you or anyone else dare to deny that what such great Wisdom and Goodness permits ought to be?⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Anselm, DV, Chapter 8 Cum vero peccans ab eo ad quem non pertinet percutitur: quoniam et iste debet percuti et ille non debet percutere, debet et non debet esse percussio; et ideo recta et non recta negari non potest.

⁸⁶ Anselm, DV, Chapter 8 Quod si ad supernae sapientiae bonitatis que consideres iudicium, sive ex altera tantum sive ex utraque parte, agentis scilicet et patientis, esse non debeat percussio: quis audebit negare debere esse quod tanta sapientia et bonitate permittitur?

This provides a strong example of the tension that occurs in Anselm's thought between the temporal and the eternal and a brief allusion to the problem of evil. Man must necessarily have free will, as was discussed in the previous chapter. This requires that bad things may at times occur due to the misuse by men of their free will. But that does not mean that those actions *ought* not to have occurred, for the very fact that they were able to do so is what allows man to be free and so to strive for perfection within the love of God. According to Anselm, we should not question this facet of ethical existence as it equates to questioning God.

Anselm's treatises and meditations provide the foundations of a rich and coherent ethical philosophy. Man possesses reason, an ability to make ethical discernments, and is driven to love and happiness. Although God's grace is necessary for true ethical goodness, he has free choice concerning the maintenance of that grace and his ability to be ethically good. Once man has given up grace through sin, he must be redeemed to once more possess true ethical goodness. Such sin occurs, as it did in the case of the Devil, through the usurpation of a will that is greater than an individual's own. This can either occur due to not upholding uprightness of will for its own sake, in the case of ethics of intent, or due to the prioritisation of animalistic happiness before the so-called higher happiness. Although such an outline is far from comprehensive in terms of an ethical philosophy it allows an excellent basis for an examination of Anselm's letter collection for further elucidation.

Anselm and Teleology: The necessity for leading the good life

Anselm's philosophical and theological works provide the reader with an understanding of why it is necessary to be ethically good. In brief, it is to allow the individual to make the most of the grace that God provides. This is not in and of itself sufficient for entrance into heaven; however, to waste the grace provided by God is the most likely way of not getting into heaven and therefore living a good life becomes an important aspect of the relationship between temporal existence and the eternal. Anselm's letters cover similar material on the subject, but are inclined towards the life experience of the individual and in particular the uncertainty of death.

The majority of the instances in which evidence of a teleological conception in Anselm's letters can be found establish relatively little about the nature of that teleology. His letter of 1086 to the Monks of Bec, for instance, establishes that Anselm was concerned with the life of an individual as a whole and that beyond single instances of being ethically good, he possessed a conception of what it meant to have lived a 'good life'. Several other important aspects of this letter can be drawn forth. Anselm felt that, on the whole, as he specifies in the salutation, the good life requires a sense of advancement (or progress as is more often used) and that it interacts in a number of critical ways with the other strands of his ethical theory. In this instance that interaction is phrased as virtue, but often intention plays a critical role as well:

TO HIS DEAREST AND MOST LONGED-FOR FELLOW-MONKS, THE
SERVANTS OF GOD LIVING AT BEC: THEIR SERVANT, BROTHER ANSELM,
WISHING THAT THEY MAY ADVANCE FROM VIRTUE TO VIRTUE THAT
THEY MAY DESERVE TO LOOK UPON THE GOD OF GODS IN SION.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Capitals are used in the English translation by Fröhlich to indicate distinctions between salutation formulae and body in individual letters. Fröhlich's form has been followed here and throughout, as indicated in the introduction. Anselm, Ep. 116 Ad monachos Beccenses. Carissimis et desideratissimis dominis suis, servis dei Becci commanentibus: servus eorum frater ANSELMUS de virtute in virtutem proficere, ut deum deorum in Sion mereantur conspiciere. Capitals are used in the English translation by Fröhlich to indicate distinctions between salutation formulae and body in individual letters. The same form has been followed here.

Anselm's use of the word 'deserve' in the salutation is interesting, for, while he would never stipulate that man must deserve God's grace, it is clear from his theological writings that man is more likely to attain and hold onto grace if he has prepared himself to receive it.

Therefore I pray, that, just as you have done till now, so you should continue supporting our journey abroad by praying; but I pray much more that you may gladden our return by having lived a good life.⁸⁸

In what is a purely pragmatic letter, the final line is significant. Anselm shows that earthly tribulations are irrelevant as a concern in comparison to the ethical considerations that are critical in having lived a good life.

Anselm's letter to Basilia, some 21 years later in c1107, is more explicative, showing the importance of progress over regress and the value of both intention and virtue. Critically it explains that all men are able to lead the good life, whether they are lay or secular. The letter itself begins with a description that is common in the Anselmian canon, of Holy Scripture as containing all the information an individual needs in order to know how they 'ought to live'. This is given a critical caveat of requiring appropriate explanation and understanding.

In this I perceive your goodwill and Christian intention, for I do not see any reason why you should desire it [a letter] except that you wish to receive from it some sound advice for your soul. Therefore, although the whole of Holy Scripture, if you have it explained to you, teaches you how you ought to live, yet I ought not to be miserly and inexorable to your holy petition.⁸⁹

Clearly feeling that a degree of explanation is, in this instance, required, Anselm seeks to describe a critical facet of the way man ought to love living a 'good life'. Such knowledge is crucial as temporal life always (by definition) comes to an end. No man knows when this

⁸⁸Anselm, Ep. 116 Precor itaque ut, sicut fecistis hactenus, ita et deinceps peregrinationem nostram orando adiuvetis; sed multo magis precor ut reditum nostrum bene vivendo laetificetis.

⁸⁹Anselm, Ep. 420 In quo recognosco vestram bonam voluntatem et Christianam intentionem. Nihil enim video cur illas desideretis, nisi ut ex illis aliquod consilium animae vestrae salubre inde accipiatis. Quamvis ergo tota sacra scriptura vos doceat qualiter vivere debeatis, si eam vobis exponi facitis: non tamen debeo esse avarus neque inexorabilis religiosae petitioni vestrae.

end will be and as such it is critical for man to work on his ethical behaviour as soon as he is able:

Let me tell you something, dearest daughter, which, if you frequently consider it with the complete attention of your mind, will enable you to inflame your heart greatly to the fear of God and the love of a good life. Let there always be before the eyes of your mind the fact that this life has an end and that no one knows when the last day, which he is constantly approaching day and night, will come.⁹⁰

Anselm then proceeds to set out his teleology in a remarkably clear fashion. Life is a journey, he explains, and on this journey we are either ascending towards our goal of heaven, or descending towards the depths of hell. This ascent or descent is governed by the good deeds and sins of the individual, although progress is only discernible when the soul has parted company with the body in death:

This life is a journey. For as long as man lives, he is always moving. He is always either ascending or descending. Either he is ascending towards heaven or descending to hell. Whenever he does any good deed he makes one step up, and when he sins in any way he makes one step down. This ascent or descent is perceived by each soul when it leaves the body. Whoever strives diligently while living here to climb by good conduct and good deeds will be placed in heaven with the holy angels; and whoever descends through bad conduct and bad deeds will be buried in hell with the fallen angels.⁹¹

Many of the phrases are clearly intended to be challenging. For instance, it is clear that Anselm would not have claimed that entrance into heaven and hell are based solely on

⁹⁰ Anselm, Ep. 420 Dicam igitur vobis, filia carissima, aliquid quod, si frequenter tota intentione mente pertractaveritis, multum cor vestrum ad timorem dei et ad amorem bene vivendi accendere poteritis. Semper sunt ante oculos mentis vestrae quia vita praesens finem habet, et nescit homo quando ultima dies, ad quam indesinenter die ac nocte propinquat, adveniat.

⁹¹ Anselm, Ep. 420 Vita praesens via est. Nam quamdiu vivit homo, non facit nisi ire. Semper enim aut ascendit aut descendit. Aut ascendit in caelum, aut descendit in infernum. Cum facit aliquod bonum opus, facit unum passum ascendendo, cum vero aliquo modo peccat, facit unum passum descendendo. Iste ascensus vel descensus tunc cognoscitur ab unaquaque anima, quando exit de corpore. Qui sollicite studet, dum hic vivit, bonis moribus et bonis operibus ascendere, in caelo collocabitur cum sanctis angelis; et qui malis moribus et malis operibus descendit, in inferno sepelietur cum perditis angelis.

conduct and deeds as he at first might appear to do. While grace is not specifically mentioned in this letter, it is reasonable to presume that he intends a similar message to his other letters, namely that the value of good ethical action is the preparation for and preservation of grace and the detriment of bad ethical action is the denigration or refusal of grace. It is far easier to lose this ground in sinning than it is to gain ground through good ethical action so attention to every possible sin, no matter how small, is critical:

You should be aware that it is much quicker and easier to descend than to ascend. For this reason a Christian man and a Christian woman should consider carefully in each of their desires or actions whether they are ascending or descending; and they should embrace with their whole heart those things in which they see themselves ascending. Those things, however, in which they perceive descent they should flee and abhor just as they would hell. Therefore I admonish and advise you, most beloved daughter and friend in God, that as far as possible with the help of God you should draw back from every sin, great or small, and engage in holy deeds.⁹²

The end of the letter clarifies Anselm's position to an extent. The assistance of God in this instance can be reasonably supposed to be an equivalent of grace. For Anselm then, ethical behaviour is critical to the good life, but the truly good life can only be lived with the assistance of God's grace.

This theme is also found in Anselm's letter of c1080/1081 to Richard and the Other Monks at St Neots, showing how universal Anselm's belief truly is. He makes a clear reference to his conception of free will and to his anthropology, showing that the essence of the good life is, as has been discussed in reference to the ethical life, involves willing beyond all else to love God. Such an experience is available to all as every man has the opportunity to perform good ethical acts. In an unusually optimistic moment, Anselm suggests that an effective ethical code can protect individuals in peace amidst tribulations in the world around them,

⁹²Anselm, Ep. 420 Hoc utique notandum est, quia valde velocius et facilius descenditur quam ascenditur. Quapropter in singulis voluntatibus et actibus suis debet Christianus et Christiana diligenter considerare si ascendat aut si descendat, et toto corde ea in quibus videt se ascendere, amplectatur; atque illa in quibus cognoscit descensum, sicut infernum fugiat et excreetur. Moneo itaque et consulo vobis, amica in deo et filia dilectissima, ut in quantum adiuvante deo potestis, ab omni peccato magno vel parvo vos retrahatis et in sanctis actibus vos exerceatis.

no doubt a reflection of his monastic audience. It must be possible, he continues, as God would never ask us to do what we were not able to do, a clear reiteration of his philosophical position.⁹³

To be sure, neither place nor time excuse anybody from being able to live a good life, since no one, wherever he may be, can exclude goodwill from the hearts of men against their will, and a code of good behaviour founded on the harmony of the world can endure in any confusion. God never demands deeds beyond our abilities when he perceives the soundness of our goodwill and good behaviour. Therefore I want you so to present yourselves in public in everything without looking for excuses, that you show yourselves to be lovers, not of the world or of those things which are in the world,⁹⁴ but of God and those things which belong to God. To the extent that others praise God for your good way of life, you will be able to rejoice in God in this life and in the next, and I indeed will be able to rejoice with you, my brothers and sons.⁹⁵

The end of the letter deals with the division between the temporal and the eternal. Love ought to be of God and those who are Godly, not the temporal matters of the world. Joy ought to be taken in such love and in the good way of life it causes, both in the self and in others. Importantly, this joy is both temporal and eternal, showing a temporal benefit to a largely eternal teleology.

Anselm's still earlier letter to Odo and Lanzo c1070/1071 provides a further illustration of this point with the addition of many of the rest of the central themes involved in Anselm's teleology. It is interesting to note that this was one of Anselm's earliest letters, showing that his thought on this matter remained relatively consistent throughout his life. The letter

⁹³ See *DCD* Chapter 16.

⁹⁴ Cf. 1 Jn 2:15.

⁹⁵ Anselm, Ep. 96 Quippe nec locus nec tempus aliquod excusat aliquem quin bene possit vivere, cum et bonam voluntatem nemo umquam alicubi a cordibus hominum ipsis nolentibus possit excludere, et morum compositio in qualibet rerum perturbatione secundum rerum congruentiam ordinata queat consistere. Opera namque deus nequaquam exigit ultra possibilitatem, ubi bonae voluntatis et bonorum morum conspicit integritatem. Sic igitur desidero ut in omnibus vosmetipsos absque omni excusatione exhibeatis, ut vos non mundi nec eorum "quae in mundo sunt", sed dei et eorum quae dei sunt, amatores ostendatis. Quatenus de bona vestra conversatione aliis deum laudantibus, vos in praesenti et futura vita in deo possitis gaudere, et ego vere possim fratribus et filiis meis congaudere.

begins with a stern warning about judgement of the self and the risks to daily progress in the matter of virtue. Just as man, by becoming disheartened might lose virtue, so too he cannot know if he is a member of the elect. As such, man must ignore past accomplishments and praise in an attempt to continue striving for improvement in the future, especially as virtue is easily lost and hard won. Anselm again uses Mt 22:14, amongst other passages, to provide authority to his statement that man does not know if he is one of the chosen, for all men are called, but there is not a biblical witness for how many will be let into heaven.

I admonish and implore you, therefore, dearest friend, as it is written: use all watchfulness to keep your heart true⁹⁶ so that nothing may catch your mind off guard. Let it examine carefully what it has gained by daily progress lest – God forbid! – it lose ground by becoming disheartened. For in the matter of virtue, as it is harder to attain a quality which one did not already possess than it is to do without it by idleness, so it is harder to regain what one has lost by negligence than to obtain what one knows he has not yet possessed. Always consider, therefore, most beloved friend, past achievements as if they were of little value, so that you do not despise maintaining what you have achieved, and always aspire, although hindered by infirmity, to add something to it by perseverance. For we are all told by Truth that, from among many called, few are chosen.⁹⁷ We are certain that all [are called] but just how few [are chosen] we are uncertain of because Truth is silent.⁹⁸

If a person/individual wishes to be among those few, he must change how he lives so as to lead a good life. Part of doing so is to recognise that he cannot know if he is one of the few and anyone who believes that they are ought to think more deeply upon the matter. An

⁹⁶ Prov 4:23.

⁹⁷ Mt 20:16, 22:14.

⁹⁸ Anselm Ep. 2 Moneo itaque et precor, carissime, quatenus, sicut scriptum est: "omni custodia serva tuum", nihil sit quod mentem tuam a sui revocet custodia. Sollicite discutiatur quid cotidie acquirat proficiendo, ne quid - quod absit - perdat deficiendo. Sicut enim in virtutibus difficilius est aliquid non habitum conando assequi quam desidia carere: ita gravius est recuperare quod per negligentiam amittitur, quam adipisci quod nondum quis habuisse cognoscitur. Semper igitur, dilectissime, praeterita quasi pro nihilo sic depones, ut et illa ad quae proficisci tenere non contemnas, et iis aliquid addere, licet per infirmitatem nequeas, tamen per impotunitatem semper contendas. Quoniam namque inter multos vocatos "pauci" sunt "electi", certi sumus omnes veritate dicente; sed quam pauci sint, incerti sumus cuncti veritate tacente.

important aspect of this passage is the fear in which men ought to live if they are not pursuing the good life:

Wherefore, anyone who does not yet live as one of the few must either join himself to the few by changing his life-style, or else fear reprobation with certainty. For indeed, someone who already judges himself to be among the few should not immediately trust that he is chosen. In fact, since nobody among us knows to how few the number of the chosen is limited, so nobody knows if he is already among this small number of the chosen, even if he is like one of the few among the many called. Therefore, nobody, looking behind him,⁹⁹ should contemplate how many he outstrips on the road to the celestial country, but continually looking ahead, let him consider anxiously whether he is advancing in the same way as those whose election none of the faithful doubts. Take care, dearest friend, lest the fear of God which you have conceived cool down; but always, as if fanned by continual attention, let it flame daily higher and higher until, transformed, it lights your way into eternal security.¹⁰⁰

Anselm's context of 'the road to the celestial country' provides an appropriate metaphor for the journey he envisages the individual undertaking as is discussed throughout this chapter. The goal for all men is clear, but it is unworthy to be judgemental upon the road and Anselm explicitly mentions that individuals ought only to compare themselves to those who have gone before in an attempt to improve their own 'way into eternal security'.

The next section of the letter to Lanzo and Odo goes on to explain how best this can be achieved. The individual must not fall away from, but rather improve upon, their intention

⁹⁹ Lk 9:62.

¹⁰⁰ Anselm, Ep. 2 Quapropter quicumque nondum vivit ut pauci: aut vitam suam corrigendo inter paucos se colligat, aut cum certitudine reprobationem timeat. Qui vero se de paucis esse iam iudicat, non statim de securitate electionis confidat. Quippe quoniam nemo nostrum scit in quantam paucitatem redigantur electi, nullus utique novit si iam sit inter paucos electos, licet iam paucorum sit similis inter multos vocatos. Nullus igitur retro repiciendo penset quam multos in via caelestis patriae praecedat; sed indeclinabiliter in anteriora intentus sollicite consideret, si iam pariter cum iis, de quorum electione nemo fidelis dubitat, incedat. Vide igitur, dilectissime, ne qualibet occasione timor dei quem concepisti tepescat; sed semper quasi indeficientu studio ventilatus in dies ferveat, donec tibi in securitatem mutatus aeternum luceat.

to lead a holy life. Each day the opportunities for leading a good life diminish and it is not sufficient to not progress but to rest assured that enough has been accomplished. This is, Anselm admits, a difficult process, but as life comes to a close, so too does the journey shorten, something that ought to be a source of joy:

Take care, most beloved brother, that you avoid what many people do – and indeed they are not as numerous as their folly is great – who, the longer they live, cherish the more the hope of living and, banishing the fear of fast-approaching death, they fall away from their intention [of living] a holy life. For it is true that the longer someone has lived, the shorter he has still to live; and the farther away he is from the day of his birth and the nearer he is to the day of his death and to recompense for the whole of his life. Therefore, just as with every single day you see your past life growing longer, so you may be certain that your span of time for living a good life is daily getting shorter. So take care, my friend, to spend the lifespan left to you – because you never know how short it is – in such a way that day by day you make progress toward what is better in the holy intentions of your mind. If you find it difficult to lead a good life, consider that the more you see your labor hastening to an end and show yourself approaching repose and reward, the harder you should work and, comforted, the more joyfully you should persevere while progressing courageously. Do not therefore give up through lassitude what you have begun, but rather, hoping for aid from above, do what is good for you and what you have not yet attempted for the love of a joyful reward, so that with Christ's guidance you may reach the blessed company of saints.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹Anselm, Ep. 2 Valde namque cavendam est, frater amatissime, illud quod multi - et non tam numero multi quam sensu stulti - faciunt, qui quanto diutius vivunt, tanto maiorem sibi spem vivendi nutriunt, et timorem festinantis mortis aicientes a proposito sanctae vitae deficiunt. Verum namque est quia quanto diutius vixit aliquis, tanto brevius victurus est; et quanto fit longius a die nativitatis suae, tanto fit propior diei mortis suae et retributioni totius vitae suae. Sicut igitur vides per singulos dies in praeteritum vitam tuam crescere, ita certus esto spatium bene vivendi cotidie tibi decrescere. Esto itaque, amice mi, sollicitus, ut spatium vitae quod tibi restat - quia nescis quam breve est - sic expendas, ut de die in diem sanctum mentis propositum ad meliora extendas. Quatenus si quid te gravat bene vivere, quanto magis laborem tuum ad finem festinare et te ad requiem et coronam appropinquare consideras, tanto fortius instando et laetius perseverando veriliter confortatus proficias. Ab incipientis ergo nulla lassitudine deficias, sed potius quae tibi expediunt et quae nondum es

Anselm ends with the promise of eternal joy for the reader should he successfully complete the path required of him. Once more he is careful to remind the reader of the necessity of guidance from the divine, as a necessary precursor to a heavenly position.

In December of 1093, Anselm wrote to Ida, Countess of Boulogne with advice on how to progress in leading a good life. In this letter he takes Mt 22:14 and explores the consequences for the necessity of good ethical action and the need to lead the good life.

My dearest friend in God, the Lord says: Many are called, but few are chosen.¹⁰² Therefore, never feel confident that you are to be reckoned among the chosen until you live in such a way that there are few with whom your life ought to be compared. And when you recognize that you are among the few, go on being fearful, because there will still be doubt as to whether you are among the chosen few until you see yourself among those few about whose election there remains no doubt. For he who says: few are chosen certainly did not say how few, so that however much we may regard ourselves to be making progress we must always consider that we have only reached the beginning of our progress. Therefore I exhort and advise my daughter, who has entrusted herself to my advice, that her endeavour towards living a good life, which she once undertook should not grow weak but, as if starting daily, should increase in fervor from day to day.¹⁰³

Many of those who are called to the Lord will not be chosen to join him in eternal salvation means that no person can or should rest on his or her laurels, as it were, in their attempts to

agressus, in spe superni auxilii pro amore felicitis praemii incipias, ut ad sanctorum beatum consortium Christo ducente pervenias.

¹⁰² Mt 22:14.

¹⁰³Anselm, Ep. 167 *Amica carissima in deo*, dominus dicit: "Multi sunt vocati, pauci vero electi". Numquam ergo segura sis te inter electos debere computari, donec ita vivas ut pauci sint, quibus vita tua debeat comparari. Et cum te in numero paucorum esse cognoveris, adhuc time, quia adhuc dubium erit si inter paucos electos fueris, donec te de illis paucis videas, de quorum electione nulla manet dubietas. Qui enim dixit: "pauci" sunt "electi", non utique dixit quam pauci, ut quantumcumque nobis videamur profecisse, semper iudicemus nos nondum nisi ad initium proficiendi pervenisse. Hortor igitur et consulo filiae meae, quae se meo commisit consilio, ut bene vivendi studium, quod olim incepit, nullatenus languescat, sed, quasi cotidie incipiat, per singulos dies ferveat.

lead a good life. An individual cannot be certain that they have been chosen until they live as though they were a saint, and, as Anselm goes on to state, at that juncture they ought to understand that even then they must renew their commitment to living the good life on a day by day basis in order to avoid regression.

Many of these themes are addressed in more standard Anselmian language in a much earlier letter sent to the Monk Herluin c1073. In it Anselm characterises many 'foolish people' who focus more earnestly upon the temporal as the day of death comes nearer, losing the intention they had set out to preserve to lead a holy life. This, for Anselm, is clearly a mistaken point of view: the day of death should not be viewed as an ending, but as the 'day of recompense' upon which an assessment will be made and the transition between the temporal and the eternal will occur. As such, each passing day ought to be taken in the context of less and less time with which to ensure that the life that the individual has led has been a good one.¹⁰⁴ The only way of ensuring that regression does not occur is to strive for daily progress in holy intention. Rather than viewing this in a pessimistic fashion, for Anselm it is a joy to be to be making progress and to approach the day of judgement:

And so, dearly beloved, take care so to use the time which remains to you – since you do not know how short it may be – that you daily achieve improvement in your holy intention. The more you realize that your task is hastening towards its end and that you are approaching your rest and crown, the more you should progress by pressing on more resolutely, persevering more joyfully, courageously comforted.¹⁰⁵

It is imperative for the individual to in no way 'abandon' or allow 'lassitude' to compromise the good life, but rather they must persevere for the sake of eternal reward. However, they will not be alone in this attempt:

¹⁰⁴Anselm, Ep. 35 Cave, frater amatissime, illud quod multi stulti faciunt, qui quanto diutius vivunt, tanto maiorem sibi spem vivendi nutriunt, et timorem festinantis mortis abicientes a proposito sanctae vitae deficiunt. Verum namque est quia quanto diutius vixit aliquis, tanto brevius victurus est; et quanto fit longius a die nativitatis suae, tanto fit propius diei mortis suae et retributionis totius vitae suae. Sicut igitur vides per singulos dies in praeteritum vitam tuam crescere, ita certus esse debes spatium bene vivendi cotidie tibi decrescere.

¹⁰⁵Anselm, Ep. 35 Esto itaque, dilectissime, sollicitus ut spatium quod restat - quia nescis quam breve est - sic expendas, ut de die in diem sanctum propositum ad meliora extendas. Quatenus quanto magis laborem tuum ad finem festinare et te ad requiem et coronam appropinquare consideras, tanto fortius instando et laetius perseverando viriliter confortatus proficias.

Do not abandon your undertaking for any lassitude, therefore, but rather, for the love of blessed reward and in hope of divine assistance, embark on those things which are good for you and which you have not yet attempted so that, with Christ's guidance, you may attain the blessed company of saints.¹⁰⁶

Although rarely addressed in cogent philosophical terms, it is passages such as the above which inform us most about Anselm's perspectives on teleology. Grace is a mystery and, as such, it is better for most men to focus their efforts upon the temporal behaviour that they can control whilst praying to the divine for guidance upon the eternal aspects that they have yet to experience.

Love is a constant theme in the early and heavily monastic part of Anselm's letter collection and Anselm expands this theme in a letter written to Monk Maurice in the Spring of 1077 to show that what one should love in others is their fulfilment of the teleology which he describes through the love of God. The reason for such love, has nothing to do with Anselm, but rather with the virtues of the monk himself and the ethical progress he has made in loving God:

Therefore I beseech you as a brother and admonish you as a dearest son, because of the concern and affection which you are well aware I have always had towards you: insofar as you progress more and more towards good conduct, you – with me – should patiently bear our separation as being ordered by Providence, as long as our lord and father, the venerable Archbishop Lanfranc, commands it; lest by impatience you in any way diminish the very qualities for which I love you most. For although I love you greatly and desire you to cling to me by living in our community with me, yet I desire even more that you cleave inseparably to a good way of life. Therefore, let it be your sole endeavour, wherever you may be, to live in a way befitting a good

¹⁰⁶Anselm, Ep. 35 *Ab inceptis ergo nulla lassitudine deficias, sed potius quae tibi expediunt et quae nondum es aggressus, in spe superni auxilii pro amore beati praemii incipias, ut ad sanctorum beatum consortium Christo ducente pervenias.*

man and servant of God; and be assured that God will provide for you whatever is good for you.¹⁰⁷

Leading a good life is phrased as being more important than any other desire that either Anselm or Maurice might feel and it is made clear that leading a good life by being a 'good man and servant of God' ought to be Maurice's 'sole endeavour'.

In order for this love to grow well and appropriately and for man to continue his progress towards the love of God and the good life, other elements must be put in place which allow him to do so effectively, as the next example shows. In his letter to the novice Lanzo (c1072/1073), identified by Eadmer later as an especially fine example of the letter of monastic vocation,¹⁰⁸ Anselm argues against the earthly desires of a novice to move monastery saying that such a focus will lead him away from the mind-set needed to lead a good life. Focusing upon other earthly desires, such as moving to a different monastery, or being unwilling to move beyond a bad start at a monastery prevents a monk from striving fully for the goal of perfection which is required to lead the good life. Once such a problem emerges, it is difficult to get rid of as it represents the 'foundation' upon which the monk ought to 'build the frame of a good life'.¹⁰⁹

Once the start has failed, it can be difficult for recovery to ever occur. If a monk's focus is ever on negative emotions and feelings then he 'never achieves stability with roots of love' and 'does not grow rich in the fruitfulness of good works'. Both metaphors provide specifically monastic examples of placing the temporal before the eternal and focusing upon earthly joys instead of living a good life in the hope of eternal joy:

¹⁰⁷Anselm, Ep. 79 Precor itaque te ut fratrem et moneo ut filium carissimum ea cura et diligentia, quam me semper erga te habuisse bene mihi es conscius: quatenus magis ac magis ad mores bonos proficias et separationem nostram, quamdiu iubebit noster dominus et pater, venerabilis archiepiscopus LANFRANCUS, me cum patienter ut divinam dispositionem tolere, nec in aliquo id unde te magis diligo, per impatientiam minuas. Quamvis namque te valde diligam et desiderem, ut mihi me cum conversando cohaereas, plus tamen opto ut bonis moribus indissolubiler inhaereas. Tota igitur cura tua sit, ut ubicumque sis sic vivas, ut bonum hominem et servum dei decet; et certus esto quia deus tibi providebit quod tibi expediet.

¹⁰⁸Eadmer, *The Life of St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (Eadmeri Monachi Cantuariensis Vita Sancti Anselmi, Archiepiscopi Cantuariensis)*, ed. and trans. R. W. Southern (London, 1963) p.32f.

¹⁰⁹Anselm, Ep. 37 Quippe dum incessanter laboriosis cogitationibus de mutando, aut si mutari non valet, saltem de improbando initio meditatur, numquam ad finem perfectionis tendere conatur. Nam quoniam illi fundamentum quod posuit displicet, nullatenus illi structuram bonae vitae superaedificare libet.

It follows, then, that just as any young tree, if frequently transplanted or often disturbed by being torn up after having recently been planted in a particular place, will never be able to take root, [and] will rapidly wither and bring no fruit to perfection, similarly an unhappy monk, if he often moves from place to place at his own whim, or remaining in one place is frequently agitated by his hatred for it, never achieves stability with roots of love, grows weary in the face of every useful exercise and does not grow rich in the fruitfulness of good works. And when he realizes – if perchance he does reflect on it – that he is making progress, not towards good, but towards evil, he unjustly assigns the whole blame for his misery not to his own behaviour but to that of others, and hence unhappily works himself up to even greater hatred of those among whom he lives.¹¹⁰

When such a monk examines his situation and circumstance he will naturally come to realize that he has progressed not towards heaven but towards hell. This realization will increase his unhappiness and the situation will ever worsen.

In the previous example, it was not the monks actions *per se* that meant that he was unable to lead a good life, rather he did not solely intend to focus upon the divine and as such got trapped caring more for the temporal and earthly. Anselm's letter of June 1103 to Prior Ernulf and the Monks of Christ Church Canterbury is similar in that it deals with intent and its relationship with ethics, yet in this instance Anselm is more general as to all of the aspects that comprise the good life for a monastic community. This is joined and reinforced by several biblical allusions:

If your hearts strive to be free for God alone, if like good workers in Christ's vineyard¹¹¹ you labor vigorously at the intention you have valiantly undertaken, if

¹¹⁰Anselm, Ep. 37 Unde fit ut, quemadmodum arbuscula, si saepe transplantetur aut nuper plantata in eodem loco crebra convulsione inquietetur, nequaquam radicare valens ariditatem cito attrahit, nec ad aliquam fructus fertilitatem provenit: sic infelix monachus, si saepius de loco ad locum proprio appetitu mutatur aut in uno permanens frequenter eius odio concutitur, nusquam amoris stabilitus radicibus, ad omne utile exercitium languescit et nulla bonorum operum ubertate ditescit. Cum que se nequaquam ad bonum, sed in malum proficere, si forte hoc recogitat, perpendit: omnem suae miseriae causam non suis, sed aliorum moribus iniustus intendit, atque inde se magis ad odium eorum inter quos conversatur infeliciter accendit.

¹¹¹ See Mt 20:1f.

your life testifies that the world is crucified to you and you to the world,¹¹² if you live not according to your own will but according to God's, if you fear God greatly even in the smallest things, if you love the rigor of your order – to hate it is a very sure sign that whoever does so is corrupt and loves licentiousness – if you keep peace among yourselves and observe obedience to Dom Prior: then this is my desire for you, this is my consolation and my tranquillity in you.¹¹³

Several of the elements Anselm describes are done so in the guise of effort. He requests that the monks 'strive to be free for God alone' and 'labor vigorously at the intention' for instance. Those that are not, tend to be directly related to other elements of his thought, such as when he requests that the monks 'love the rigor of your order', 'keep peace', and 'observe obedience'. The opposites are a sure sign of sin. When Anselm is juxtaposing the love of the religious order, he does not say that to hate the order is to show wickedness, but rather makes the more general statement that hate in and of itself is a sure sign of inappropriate love.

Anselm's letter to the same correspondants later that year, shows the breadth of Anselm's ethical thought and its different applications by speaking about progress through virtue, albeit in an indirect manner.

Indeed, as far as we are concerned, as I have already said, everything is going well with us; but if you are living in peace and, as I hope, devoted to living a good life and saving your souls according to my wish, then my joy is increased much more and more truly.¹¹⁴

¹¹² See Gal 6:14.

¹¹³Anselm, Ep. 286 Si corda vestra soli deo student vacare, si proposito quod fortiter arripuistis, velut boni in Christi vinea operarii strenue insudatis, si mundum vobis crucifixum et vos mundo vita vestra testatur, si non vobis sed deo, id est non vestrae sed dei voluntati vivitis, si etiam in minimis deum valde timetis, si districtiorem ordinis vestri amatis, quam qui odit certissimo signo se vitiosum esse et dissolutionem diligere demonstrat, si pacem inter vos et oboedientiam domno priori servatis: hoc est desiderium meum de vobis, haec consolatio et requies mea in vobis.

¹¹⁴Anselm, Ep. 289 Quantum quidem ad nos pertinet, sicut dixi, omnia nobis prospere sunt; sed si vos in pace et, sicut spero, in studio bene vivendi et salvandi animas vestras vivitis secundum desiderium meum: tunc multo magis et verius augetur gaudium meum.

Once more Anselm returns to his constant theme of peace as a requirement for the good life to exist. The separation of leading a good life and the saving of souls seems to be a reiteration of Anselm's view that man can control the first but cannot control the second. It is not and cannot be known during life whether the individual will be 'saved' for eternal life in heaven, but man can know through virtue and intent that they are living a good life. To Anselm, clearly, both are important as he places them as requisites for joy in this context.

As such, the monks are implored to make progress in a number of ways, not the least of which is in living a good life. In addition to such progress, they are requested to not fail in effectively using what grace God has granted them, reiterating the division previously mentioned. In addition to what are reasonably common exhortations to peace and love, with the particular Anselmian twist of 'for God's sake', the monks are informed that prayer is an important aspect of the good life as those to whom they pray are those for whom they ought to be leading the good life. This seems to be a theological rendition of Anselm's argument that man ought to live as though his will were one with God's. Yet on this instance Anselm goes further. He asks the monks to pray to God for temporal assistance in order to avoid any mishap on their journey to the temporal.

Therefore I beg with as much affection as I can that you may always be anxious to make progress towards better things and on no account to fail in those towards which the grace of God has led you. Preserve the sweetness of love and harmony towards each other for God's sake, love the rigor of your order without pretence, lift up your hearts without interruption to the company of the angels for which you are leading a good life, and through your prayers hope for consolation of God in every temporal difficulty and adversity, if such should occur, lest your good endeavour be disturbed in anyway. Wherever you may be, either in the sight of men or only in the sight of God, from whom you are never separated, in all your doings, great or small, even in your thoughts, always with the psalmist, bear your souls in your hands.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ See Ps 118:109.

May almighty God so protect and guide you in all things that he may lead you through temporal good fortune to eternal bliss.¹¹⁶

The end of the letter reiterates the previous point. Man must be guided between the temporal and the eternal and, unsurprisingly, God is put forward as the greatest guide. One of many reasons for this is also included. Although men can only judge other men when they are in proximity, man is never out of the sight of God.

Anselm's next letter to Prior Ernulf and the Monks of Christ Church Canterbury, written in 1104, provides a fascinating glimpse of Anselm putting his theological and ethical beliefs into a single normative statement about how the monks ought to live. He begins with a typical belittlement of the temporal world, showing that the contemporary political wrangling was not important compared to consideration of the divine. As such, the manner in which one ought to live should not be shaped by such concerns, but rather, focus should still be placed upon seeking the eternal. Tribulations ought not to be a matter for concern, but rather an opportunity to show appropriate focus. Instead of being troubled, one ought to lead a good life, just as one would were troubles not to exist, for leading a good life is a form of prayer to the divine.

Whatever the King may reply or whatever may become of me, remember that whether we live or whether we die, we belong to the Lord.¹¹⁷ Therefore, live in such a way that you live for him, and when you die you may go to him. Do not let the tribulations of this life disturb you because through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.¹¹⁸ Cast your thought on the Lord, and he will sustain you, and

¹¹⁶Anselm, Ep. 289 Precor itaque quanto affectu possum, ut semper ad meliora solliciti sitis proficere, et nullatenus ab iis, ad quae vos dei gratia provexit, deficere. Ad invicem secundum deum dilectionis et concordiae dulcedinem servate, ordinis vestri distractionem sine simulatione amate, corda vestra ad societatem angelorum, propter quam bene vivitis, sine intermissione levate, in omni difficultate et adversitate temporali, si contigerit, ne bonum studium vestrum aliquatenus perturbetur, consolationem dei orando sperate. Ubicumque estis, sive in conspectu hominum sive tantum in conspectu dei, a quo numquam abestis: in omnibus actionibus vestris, magnis vel parvis, etiam in cogitationibus, cum psalmista animas vestras in manibus vestris semper portate. Omnipotens deus sic vos protegat in omnibus et dirigat, ut ad aeternam beatitudinem per temporalem prosperitatem perducatur.

¹¹⁷ Rm 14:8.

¹¹⁸ Ac 14:22.

will not deliver the just to eternal uncertainty.¹¹⁹ Pray to God by living a good life, not by tormenting your minds, so that he may make you continually rejoice in his consolation.¹²⁰

The final portion of the letter reverts to more standard theological fare, but by including ethical content, Anselm has made a sweeping statement about the necessity to be ethically good as a critical facet of devotional behaviour. This is compounded by his admonition to carefully examine thoughts and feelings, hearkening back to his work on intent and the reasons behind will.

I exhort and admonish the boys and youths as my sweetest sons, with as much affection as I can, not to forget the admonition and the teaching with which I used to instruct them how to watch over their hearts and thoughts. By frequently meditating on our advice, just as I zealously used to praise and commend it to them, they should strive with God's grace to observe it. May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds.¹²¹

The end of the letter contextualises the ethical content in terms of God's grace and the necessity for man to 'strive' in order to preserve and maintain it. Ultimately then, progress along the path between the temporal and the eternal requires both the ethical and theological components of Anselm's thought.

Yet progress can be lost, as Anselm is not shy about specifying. Anselm's letter to Countess Ida, written sometime after 1086, begins with a salutation that makes Anselm's position on

¹¹⁹ Ps 54:23.

¹²⁰Anselm, Ep. 291 Quidquid autem rex respondeat vel quidquid de me sit: mementote quia "sive vivimus, sive morimur, domini sumus". Sic igitur vivite, ut illi vivatis, et cum moriemini, ad illum transeatis. Non vos perturbent tribulationes huius vitae, quia "per multas tribulationes oportet nos intrare in regnum dei". Iactate cogitatum vestrum in domino "et ipse "vos" enutriet, non dabit in aeternum fluctuationem" iustis. Orate deum bene vivendo, non mentes vestras turbando, ut in sua semper consolatione faciat vos laetari.

¹²¹Ph 4:7; Anselm, Ep. 291 Pueros et adolescentes ut filios dulcissimos hortor et moneo, quanto possum affectu, ut monitionis et doctrinae, qua eos de cordis et cogitationum custodia solebam instruere, non obliviscantur, sed consilium nostrum saepe retractando, sicut eam studiose magnificare et commendare illis solebam, per gratiam dei custodire nitantur."Pax dei, quae exsuperat omnem sensum, custodiat corda vestra et intelligentias vestras".

the role of life clear, that the temporal is lived in the hopes of reaching appropriate stature in the eternal.

TO HIS REVEREND AND DEAREST LADY, COUNTESS IDA: BROTHER ANSELM, WISHING THAT SHE MAY REACH ETERNAL THROUGH TEMPORAL RICHES.¹²²

In the first portion of the letter Ida is warned of one cause of ethical lassitude and the decline of appropriate intention to lead a good life, the devil's crafty ways:

JUST AS THE TRUE LOVE I bear for your reverence for God's sake cannot fail in its purity, so it should never fail in giving wholesome advice. Although I would continually hope, therefore, that your prudence will in every respect be vigilant, lest the crafty enemy by some trick harm your intention of leading a good life, nevertheless, if I go so far as to suggest that you carry out even more assiduously what you are already doing well, this should not be adjudged superfluous.

Anselm then moves on to his main purpose, a discussion of possession and maintenance of ethical goodness:

Nobody can maintain the degree of goodness in life which he has already achieved if he does not continually seek to progress towards even higher virtues. Someone who wants to avoid falling back, therefore, must continually strive for perfection. So may your reverence guard itself, nay, rather, may God guard your heart and lips and actions always and everywhere, that your life may never and nowhere fall into any sin great or small.¹²³

¹²²Anselm, Ep. 131 Reverendae et carissimae dominae suae comitissae IDAE: frater ANSELMUS per bona temporalia ad aeterna pertingere.

¹²³Anselm, Ep. 131 Sicut verus amor, quem secundum deum erga reverentiam vestram habeo, a sua integritate non potest deficere: ita numquam debet a salubri exhortatione deficere. Quamvis igitur semper sperem prudentiam vestram undique sibi prospicere, ne callidus hostis aliqua fraude violare valeat bonae vitae propositum: nequaquam tamen, si vel tantum suggero, ut instantius faciatis quod bene facitis, iudicandum est esse superfluum. Nullus enim gradum bonae vitae, quem iam conscendit, custodire sufficit, qui semper ad altiorem proficere non appetit. Semper igitur necesse est, ut nitatur ad profectum, qui semper vult vitare defectum. Sic itaque se reverentia vestra, immo deus cor et os et actus vestros semper et ubique custodiat, ut vita vestra numquam et nusquam in magna vel parva culpa decidat.

Just to possess ethical goodness is in no way sufficient to maintain ethical goodness. Without continually striving for higher and greater virtues, that which have already been attained are subject to loss. Indeed, Anselm goes a step further, stipulating that nothing short of attempting perfection is sufficient in the maintenance of the good life.

The section is ended with a suggestion that it is only through God that such progress is indeed safe. This falls into three areas that are important for Anselm ethically: heart, lips, and actions. The first is a non-philosophical approximation of his philosophical statements about intent and the will. The second and third fall, broadly, into what he discussed earlier in the letter, namely, the virtues of the individual. His final statement, that sins both 'great and small', is a theme to which he returns in a number of letters and that he explains more fully when discussing intention. It is not the size of the sin that is critical, for in both cases the individual intended to sin and as such, in order to lead a good life, both must be avoided as much as possible.

Anselm provides further details about the ways in which progress towards the good life can be lost in his later letter to Eulalia, Abbess of Shaftesbury, and Her Nuns sent in the Autumn of 1106. The letter begins with examples of how the good life can be lead before turning to how it might be lost. To this end, Anselm instructs the nuns in the value of subjection and obedience, echoing the desire for one's will to be obedient to the will of God. He does provide the caveat that if the will of the superior is against the will of God then obedience is no longer a virtue. Once more he specifies that man's concern must not be solely about how the individual appears before other men, but rather how also man appears to God:

You, beloved sisters and daughters of mine, I exhort and admonish to be subject and obedient to your mother, not merely before human eyes but also before the eyes of God, to whom nothing is hidden. True obedience is when the will of the subordinate so obeys the will of the superior that, wherever the subordinate may be, she wishes what she knows the superior wishes, as long as it is not against the will of God. Your community ought to be a temple of God and the temple of God is holy.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Ep. 403 Vos, sorores dilectae et filiae meae, hortor et moneo, quatenus matri vestrae subiectae et oboedientes sitis, non tantum ad oculum humanum, sed etiam ad oculum dei, cui nihil est secretum. Tunc autem est vera oboedientia, quando voluntas subiecti oboedit voluntati praelati, ut,

To better illustrate his point, Anselm uses 1 Co 3:17, a recurring reference in his letter collection. Intention and the Rule must be maintained and man must always strive for progress, even in the smallest matters, to avoid regression.

If therefore, you live in a holy manner, as I hope you do, then you are the temple of God. You live in a holy manner if you diligently keep your rule and your intention. You do this diligently if you do not scorn the smallest things. Your intention should always be to strive for progress and to dread regress with all your heart. For it is written that one who despises little things fails little by little.¹²⁵ One who fails makes no progress. Therefore, if you wish to progress and dread regress do not despise the little things. As it is true that one who despises little things fails little by little so it is true that one who does not despise little things progresses little by little.¹²⁶

Progress and regress are similar in that they are both comprised of many little actions taken together over an extended period of time and both are gradual processes.

The next section of the letter moves into greater detail about the nature of regression. Anselm concedes that some sins are more severe than others, but points out that even the most minor are very serious indeed. To illustrate his point, he uses the expulsion narrative as an example of how a small sin, in this instance disobedience, could have drastic consequences. By thinking always that they are in the sight of God, the nuns can avoid such pitfalls and give due care an attention to all matters.

Do not think that any sin is small, although one may be greater than another. Nothing done by disobedience – and that alone drove man out of paradise – should be called small. What sin will be small if Truth bears witness that one who is angry with his brother will answer for it before the court of justice; one who says ‘Raca’

ubicumque sit subiectus, hoc velit quod intelligit velle praelatum, quid non sit contra voluntatem dei. Congregatio vestra templum dei debet esse, et "templum dei sanctum est".

¹²⁵ Si 19:1 (Ecclesiasticus 19:1).

¹²⁶ Anselm, Ep. 403 Si ergo sancte vivitis, sicut spero, templum dei estis. Sancte autem vivitis, si ordinem et propositum vestrum diligenter custoditis. Diligenter vero hoc facitis, si minima non contemnitis. Vestrum enim propositum semper debet niti ad profectum, et toto corde horrere defectum. Scriptum autem est: "Qui modica despicit, paulatim decedit". Qui autem decedit, non proficit. Proinde si vultis proficere et horretis deficere: nolite modica despiciere. Utique sicut verum est: "qui modica despicit, paulatim decedit", ita verum est quia qui modica non despicit, paulatim proficit.

must answer for it before the council; and one who says 'You fool' must answer for it in hell fire!¹²⁷ I ask you therefore, my dearest daughters, not to neglect anything but to strive to keep your works and your hearts always as if they were in God's sight.¹²⁸

In the final section of the letter, Anselm brings out the necessity for peace in leading a Holy Life. One who maintains such a peace will be doubly successful in the temporal world because the tribulations of the earth will not offend them. This is achieved by following God's Law, 'Keep peace among yourselves because in peace God makes his abode;¹²⁹ and great peace have they who love God's law and nothing shall offend them.'¹³⁰

Anselm and other monastic authors have historically been characterized as writing ethics solely for those who lived within cloistered walls. There are many reasons why this analysis has continued for as long as it has. Anselm's philosophical works were written in a cloistered environment and for others living in monastic environments. In addition, Anselm never explicitly writes an ethical treatise with others in mind, for instance taking into account the vagaries of the secular life. Anselm's letters, on the other hand, contain a vast source of discussion about the merits of monastic and secular living, both in terms of Anselm instructing lay individuals on the best ways to lead a ethical life outside of the cloister and in terms of Anselm writing to perspective monks hoping to convince them of the merit of the monastic life. Even Vanderjagt phrases Anselm's teleology in an exclusively monastic manner, but a careful reading of Anselm's letters seems to indicate that this position neglects a critical facet of Anselm's thought – that all men, even those who live a secular life, can still lead the good life.

For the present purpose, Anselm's strongest argument was written to a man named Henry in the spring of 1086. He uses a number of different arguments to show that the monastic

¹²⁷ Mt 5:22.

¹²⁸Anselm, Ep. 403 Nolite putare aliquod peccatum esse parvum, quamvis aliud alio sit maius. Nihil enim quod fit per inoboedientiam - quae sola eiecit hominem de paradiso -, parvum dici debet. Quod enim peccatum parvum erit, si testante veritate: "qui irascitur fratri suo, reus erit iudicio; et qui dixerit 'racha', reus erit concilio; et qui dixerit 'fatue', reus erit gehennae ignis"? Rogo igitur, filiae carissimae, ut nihil negligatis, sed opera vestra et corda vestra sicut in conspectu dei custodire semper studeatis.

¹²⁹ Ps 75:3.

¹³⁰Anselm, Ep. 403 Pacem inter vos habete, quia "in pace factus est locus" dei: et "pax multa diligentibus legem" dei, "et non est illis scandalum". Corde et ore vobis benedictionem et absolutionem dei oro, et meam, si quid valet, quantum possum do et mando. Ps 118:165.

profession, though by no means fool proof is the surest manner of reaching man's end. He begins by returning to a familiar theme and questioning the value of temporal goods in comparison to their eternal equivalents.

Ponder, therefore, dear friend: however much of the world's glory you may acquire, what would be the end and in the end what would be the fruit, what would be the reward? And on the other hand, [ponder] what awaits those who trample the glory of the world under foot.¹³¹

He then proceeds to admit that monastic profession is not the only way to lead a ethically good and indeed, less sinful life, however he argues that is easier to do so in a community dedicated exclusively to that aim.

If you say, 'not only monks reach salvation,' it is true. But who are more certain [to do so], who higher? Those who strive to love God alone or those who want to couple love of God and love of the world at the same time? But perhaps someone may say that there is also danger in a community of monks. O why does the person who says this not consider what he says? O rational nature, but, since there is danger everywhere, is it rational advice which says that you choose to remain where the danger is greater?¹³²

His return to the theme of love is critical to his continued use of teleology throughout. The aforementioned passage is echoed strongly in *Cur deus homo*. This is backed up by the questioning of the motives of a man who feels the monastic desire but refuses to act upon this conviction.

Moreover, if someone who endeavors to love God alone keeps his intention to the end, his salvation is certain. But if someone who wishes to love the world does not abandon his intention before the end, his salvation is either non-existent or doubtful

¹³¹Anselm, Ep. 121 Pensa igitur, dulcis amice, quantalibet mundi gloria potitus fueris, quis sit finis et in fine quis fructus, quod praeium; et econtra quae sit expectatio mundi gloriam calcantium.

¹³²Anselm, Ep. 121 Si dicis: non soli monachi ad salutem perveniunt: verum est. Sed qui certius, qui altius: illi qui solum deum conantur amare, an illi qui amorem dei et amorem saeculi simul volunt copulare? Sed forsitan dicet aliquis quia et in ordine monachorum est periculum. O homo qui hoc dicit, quare non considerat quid dicit! O rationalis natura, an est hoc rationabile consilium ut, quia ubique est periculum, ibi eligas manere, ubi maius est periculum?

or of a lesser degree. Surely someone who does not choose to pursue that good when he perceives it to be more certain and better, proves clearly that he does not love what is good at all, or he loves it only a little.¹³³

Anselm feels that a monk who breaks his vows has more to answer for than an individual who does not take such vows in the first place, however, he adds an additional twist, insisting that God will take back a penitent monk more readily because he was willing to make the commitment in the first place.

But many say: God is more angered at the monk who sins than at others, because he falls from a loftier commitment. This is true as long as he is in sin. But surely God receives the penitent monk more kindly and more tenderly if he returns to his commitment than [he does] the non-monk who has not even reached this commitment. For even after serious sin, the man whose commitment, both before and afterwards, is such that he cannot have a greater, pleases God more than someone who, either before or after a similar sin, neither wishes nor intends to do better, because he is unable to do it. If, therefore, it is better for the innocent and the penitent to come and to return to the monastic life rather than to stay away, why do you delay? If you are snatched away from this life before [taking this step], the loss incurred is irreparable.¹³⁴

Anselm's insistence that the profession must be made before death is not an uncommon line of argumentation in his letters, appearing in several others. It can be viewed as an element of the dichotomy of the temporal and the eternal that we have only so long in which to acquire our salvation prior to a fate that lasts quite literally eternally.

¹³³Anselm, Ep. 121 Denique si ille, qui solum deum nititur amare, servat propositum usque in finem: certa est salus. Si vero ille, qui mundum vult amare, non deserit suum propositum ante finem: aut nulla aut dubia aut minor est salus. Et certe satis probat quia nullatenus aut parum aliquod bonum diligit, qui illud ubi certius et melius cognoscit non eligit.

¹³⁴Anselm, Ep. 121 Sed dicunt multi: Gravius irascitur deus peccanti monacho quam alii, quia de proposito altiori cadit. Hoc verum est, quamdiu est in peccato. Sed certe benignius et familiarius suscipit deus monachum paenitentem, si ad suum propositum redit, quam non-monachum, qui ad idem propositum non venit. Plus namque placet deo, etiam post grave peccatum, cuius propositum est et ante et post quo maius habere non potest, quam ille, qui nec ante nec post simile peccatum vult proponere quo melius non potest. Si ergo et innocentibus et paenitentibus melius est ad vitam monachicam venire et redire quam absistere: quid moraris? Si prius de hac vita tolleris, damnum est irrecuperabile.

I could tell you much, dearest friend, about the sublimity and moral certainty, the tranquillity and the joy of monastic life if this letter did not already exceed its limits. Hurry therefore, towards so great a good because you will not reach the supreme good more successfully by any other means.¹³⁵

It is critical in this last passage that he mentions both the increased certainty and joy that can be found in the discussion of lofty matters. As examined in the chapters on Anselm's Ethics, his was not a theory of despair, but rather of hope. The monastic life may be considered the beacon of that hope.

In August 1104, while staying in Lyon, Anselm wrote to three monks who had initially abandoned their monastery, only to return. His words provide a fitting illustration of the joy which he believed it held.

I HAVE HEARD that through the persuasion of the ancient serpent¹³⁶ whose cunning drove our first parents out of paradise, you have in your turn abandoned the paradise of the cloister and the religious way of life, and for this I am deeply grieved. But I was consoled and gladdened because God did not shut the gate of paradise to you so that you could not enter it later but rather mercifully forced you to return to the peace which you had left behind.¹³⁷

The reference to the gate of paradise is no doubt intended as both an illustration of how Anselm perceives the monastery, but also as a metaphor for how paradise is obtained. The monks are able to return and in doing so are still able to work towards the eternal paradise from within the temporal one.

¹³⁵Anselm, Ep. 121 Multa, carissime, de monachicae vitae altitudine et certitudine, de quiete et iucunditate dicere possem, si epistola modum non excederet. Festina ergo ad tantum bonum, quia nullo bono efficacius venies ad summum bonum.

¹³⁶ See Rev 12:9.

¹³⁷Anselm, Ep. 333 Audivi quia persuasione serpentis antiqui, cuius astutia primos parentes nostros de paradiso eiecit, claustrale paradisum et religiosam conversationem, quantum ad vos, deseruistis, et valde dolui; sed consolatus sum et laetificatus quia non clausit deus vobis ostium paradisi, ne ultra in illud intraretis, sed potius vos misericorditer coegit, ut ad requiem relictam rediretis.

Yet even this position is tempered and made practical. In a letter to a fellow monk, Robert, in the Spring of 1086, Anselm suggests that if a man is not capable of living by monastic rules, then it is better to drop the pretence than to repeatedly break an oath made to God.

Therefore I pray that, if you love me and my advice – just as I have always loved and do love you –, you should go back to your monastery and there, together with others, serve God in a tranquil and gracious way of life. If, however, you do not choose to agree with me, know that this is not good for your soul and you sadden me. But if it is too hard for you to keep [the rules of conduct] I recommended to you, I would rather you abandon them than do anything that would harm your soul or your reputation. I will not now repeat the unpleasant gossip which is being spread about you in England in connection with this affair.¹³⁸

This acknowledgement, that not all men are suited for the monastic profession, in conjunction with his statements that men can be ethical outside of the monastic profession provides convincing evidence that he intended his ethical philosophy to be applied both inside and outside the cloister. But this begs the question, how is the lay man to behave? After all, the monasteries had their various Rules to regulate their lives, but seemingly the lay man is in more difficulty. Fortunately, Anselm tells us.

In a letter to Hugh the Hermit (c. 1086), Anselm responds to a request for devotional materials to inspire laymen and secular individuals to the love of God so that they might behave in such a fashion that they might eventually enter heaven. Anselm begins by making it clear that such a path is available to all men.

¹³⁸Anselm, Ep. 119 Precor igitur ut, si me et consilium meum diligitis - sicut ego vos semper dilexi et diligo -, ad monasterium vestrum veniatis et ibi cum aliis pacifica et benigna conversatione deo serviatis. Si autem mihi acquiescere nolueritis, scitote quia animae vestrae non expedit et me contristatis. Quod si vobis grave est placita tenere quae vobis commendavi, magis volo ut illa dimittatis, quam quod animam aut famam vestram laedat faciatis. Non dico modo verba inconvenientia, quae de vobis pro hac occasione dicuntur in Anglia.

Therefore I consider that an illiterate person, incapable of grasping higher ideas, could be encouraged towards the desire for eternal beatitudes in the following way.¹³⁹

Anselm follows this with a simplistic reiteration of the most fundamental aspect of his ethical philosophy, that willing what God wills is the greatest possible good and that heaven is composed entirely of individuals of such a mode of willing.

Moreover, since reigning in heaven is nothing but being so welded in love into one will with God and all holy angels and men, that all at the same time experience one power: love God more than yourself and you will already begin to hold what you want to have there in perfection. Be of one heart with God and men – as long as they are not opposed to God – and you shall already begin to reign with God and all the saints. According to how well you are of one heart with God and men in their will, so God and all the saints will be on one heart with you in your will. If therefore, you will to be king in heaven, love God and men as you should and you will deserve to be what you choose.¹⁴⁰

However, such a task is not easily accomplished for many who live outside the cloistered walls. Anselm provides what he no doubt felt was a simple parable.

But you shall not be able to possess this perfect love until you have emptied your heart of all other love. Indeed with the human heart and this love it is as with the vessel and the oil. The more water, or any other similar liquid, the vessel holds, the less oil it can contain; so, too, to the extent the heart is occupied by any other love, in the same measure it excludes this one. Here is another comparison: as a stench is the opposite of a scent, and darkness of light, so all other love is to this love. Just as

¹³⁹Anselm, Ep. 112 Sic itaque aliquem illiteratum et qui altiora capere non possit, ad beatitudinis aeternae desiderium existimo posse invitari.

¹⁴⁰Anselm, Ep. 112 Denique quoniam regnare in caelo non est aliud quam sic conglutinari cum deo et cum omnibus sanctis angelis et hominibus per dilectionem in unam voluntatem, ut omnes utantur simul una potestate: ama deum plus quam te ipsum, et iam incipis tenere quod ibi perfecte vis habere. Concorda cum deo et cum hominibus - si tantum a deo ipsi non discordent -, et iam incipis cum deo et cum omnibus sanctis regnare. Nam secundum quod tu concordabis modo cum deo et cum hominibus in illorum voluntate, concordabit tunc deus et omnes sancti te cum in tua voluntate. Si ergo vis esse rex in caelo, ama deum et homines sicut debes, et mereberis esse quod optas.

opposites cannot exist together at the same time, therefore, so this love cannot reside within a single heart along with any other love. So it is that those who fill their hearts with love of God and their neighbour will nothing but what God wills or another person wills – as long as this is not contrary to God.¹⁴¹

Once more we see the encouragement towards obedience coupled with the warning not to be obediently led astray. Anselm proceeds from this point in the letter to offer a string of more practical pieces of advice.

From this it follows that they press on eagerly by prayers, conversations, and meditations on heavenly things, because it is pleasant for them to desire God and to speak and hear and meditate about him whom they love so much. From this it follows that they rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep,¹⁴² mourn with those who mourn and give to the needy: because they love other as much as themselves. From this it follows that they despise riches, power and pleasure and being honoured and praised. For someone who loves these things often does something contrary to God and his neighbour. For on these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.¹⁴³ Therefore, anyone who wishes to possess perfectly this love with which the kingdom of heaven is purchased should love contempt, poverty, hard work and submission, as do holy men. For he who humbles himself will be exalted.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹Anselm, Ep. 112 Hunc vero amorem non poteris habere perfectum, nisi evacuaveris cor tuum ab omni alio amore. Quippe sic est de corde hominis et de hoc amore, quomodo de vase et oleo. Nam sicut vas quanto magis habet aquam aut alium similem liquorem, tanto minus capit oleum: ita cor in quantum occupatur alio amore, in tantum excludit istum. Est et aliud: quia sicut fetor est contrarius odori et tenebrae luci, sic omnis alius amor huic amori. Sicut igitur contraria numquam simul integre conveniunt, sic nec iste amor cum ullo alio amore in uno corde. Hinc est quod qui cor suum implet dilectione dei et proximi, nihil aliud volunt nisi quod vult deus aut quod vult alius homo - tantum si non sit contra deum.

¹⁴² Rom 12:15.

¹⁴³ Mt 22:40.

¹⁴⁴ Lk 18:14; Anselm, Ep. 112 Hinc est quod instant orationibus et caelestibus colloquiis et cogitationibus, quia dulce est illis desiderare deum et loqui et audire et cogitare de illo, quem multum amant. Hinc est quod gaudent cum gaudentibus, flent cum flentibus, misereantur miseris, donant indigentibus: quia alios homines tamquam se ipsos amant. Hinc est quod contemnunt divitias, potestates, voluptates et honorari aut laudari. Qui enim haec amat, saepe facit aliquid contra deum et contra proximum. Sic enim "ex his duobus praeceptis universa lex pendet et prophetae". Qui ergo vult

In brief, Anselm is employing a simple language to extol a lifestyle of virtue that accords closely with his ethical writings (both in his letters and his philosophical writings). It is interesting to note that Anselm suggests that Hugh, although not necessarily the secular individuals he is hoping to inspire, would do well to read the Proslogion as a source of inspiration for leading a ethical life. This shows how deeply Anselm considered his anthropology to be intertwined with his ethical and normative philosophy – a single seamless worldview that encapsulated all aspects of living.

The final example is in an interesting one in its own right. In 1104 Anselm wrote to Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, thanking her for assistance and safe passage, but also giving her advice on how she might lead a holy life yet still continue to work for the church in the secular world.

I always preserve in my heart the memory of your holy desire through which your heart yearns to hold the world in contempt; but the holy and unwavering love which you have for mother Church lovingly holds you back. From this it is evident that your reverence is pleasing to God in every way and therefore, while calmly awaiting a definite sign from God, you should patiently bear the burden which you are carrying in tribulation with good hope. Nevertheless I presume to give you a word of advice: if you see yourself threatened by certain danger of death – which God avert! – give yourself totally to God before you leave this life, and for this purpose you should always have secretly in your possession a veil which you have prepared. Whatever I may say, I pray and desire for you that God may entrust you to nothing save his providence and advice.¹⁴⁵

illum amorem habere perfecte, quo regnum caelorum emitur: amet contemptum, paupertatem, laborem, subiectionem, sicut sancti viri faciunt. Sic enim "qui se humiliat, exaltabitur".

¹⁴⁵Anselm, Ep. 325 Sancti desiderii vestri in corde meo semper servo memoriam, quo ad contemptum mundi cor vestrum anhelat; sed illud sancta et necessaria, quam erga matrem ecclesiam habetis, dilectio pie retardat. In quo intelligitur reverentia vestra ex utraque parte deo placere, et ideo debetis, aequo animo certum dei consilium exspectando, onus quod portatis in angaria cum bona spe patienter sustinere. Hoc tamen praesumo consulere ut, si certum mortis periculum interim - quod deus avertat! senseritis imminere, prius vos deo omnino reddatis, quam de hac vita exeatis; et ad hoc velum semper paratum secrete penes vos habeatis. Quidquid dicam: hoc oro, hoc desidero, ut deus nulli vos nisi suae committat dispositioni et consilio.

In this letter, Anselm stipulates a positive to the non-monastic existence, namely that by assisting the church from a position of authority, Matilda does more good than if she were to enter a monastery. Anselm, of course, encourages her to live a life similar to that of a nun and even encourages her to carry a veil with her at all times in case she requires it upon her death bed. This is the sole mention in Anselm's corpus that a willing individual should not enter a monastic environment and shows that, if nothing else, he is aware of a broader need for rule and control. By having a friend with the power of Matilda, the Church is better able to maintain its rights and privileges than if she were to enter a monastery. It would therefore seem to be the greater good and, on her part, a more virtuous path.

From Anselm's letters about the secular and the monastic several critical aspects of his ethical and normative philosophy have become clear. Primarily, his philosophy was not simply intended to apply exclusively to the cloistered world, but had secular implications as well. Anselm is quite prepared to admit that a good life may be led outside of the monastic environment, although he of course feels that the cloister provides the surer path. Within the monastic environment it is critical to live to a higher standard and Anselm indicates that there are certain individuals for whom it is simply not possible.

These observations fit in with his broader thoughts about human teleology. Life, to Anselm, is clearly envisioned as a journey between the temporal and the eternal. The goal for mankind is clearly ascertainable from scripture. While God's assistance is a necessary prerequisite for meeting this goal, there are certain actions that man can undertake in order to prepare himself for and preserve the grace that God gives. These actions comprise a complex ethical schema that, at its most simple, can be reduced to two different lenses through which ethical action can be viewed: an ethics of intent and a system of virtue ethics. These differing, though complimentary, schemes will be examined in the two subsequent chapters.

Ethics of Intent

Ethical schema based on intent were not unknown in the time period, with Abelard providing the most notable example, and Anselm's thought, upon closer scrutiny seems to provide an earlier example. It is important to note that Anselm uses intent in two distinct, yet related, fashions over the course of his letter collection. The first is the intention of leading a holy life. Generally, although not exclusively, this form of intent is addressed to those living in a monastic setting or those who are members of the church hierarchy. The second is the intention that exists behind a specific action or series of actions towards a specific outcome. Needless to say the two are not mutually exclusive and, indeed, the first can be seen as an *ad absurdum* form of the second. An individual who possesses holy intent to lead a good life will necessarily have to possess good intention throughout that life in order to be successful.

The manner in which Anselm discusses the ethics of intention throughout his letters makes it clear that, far from being a conception unique to Anselm, the concept at least was relatively well known and an important aspect of the intellectual milieu of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. Although never explained in a truly systemic fashion, from a variety of Anselm's letters it is possible to gain an understanding of his conception of why intention is an important aspect of ethical theory and the manner in which it ought to impact upon ethical decision making. Primarily this is shown through the integration of intention based ethics with the teleological conception discussed in the last chapter. This is augmented by several specific points upon which Anselm takes a firm stance. Evil actions, for ultimately good ends, are ruled out as being ethically bad for the sake of their initial intention. Intention is also singled out as a manner in which God is uniquely able to judge men. This has two striking implications elucidated by Anselm. The first is that even a seemingly good ethical action that is caused by a bad intention will be seen as sinful by God. The second is that men must be extremely careful when judging other men, because it is not always possible to understand or to be certain of what type of intention caused them to will a specific action to occur. Similarly, Anselm draws a firm comparison between the two types of wills that he discussed at length in his treatises and the intentions that will often present themselves to individuals making an ethical decision. The distinction between feeling

compelled towards bad intention and succumbing to it is discussed as a common occurrence.

Intention, for Anselm, is not simply and exclusively related to individual actions but must also be considered in terms of Anselm's teleological conception of human existence. For, as the following letter, to the monk Herluin c.1073, shows, the long term goal must be intended in addition to the importance of individual circumstances. This having been said, Anselm's statement about daily improvement is important. The long-term intention possessed by an individual can waiver, alter, and, indeed, grow stronger:

And so, dearly beloved, take care so to use the time which remains to you – since you do not know how short it may be – that you daily achieve improvement in your holy intention. The more you realize that your task is hastening towards its end and that you are approaching your rest and crown, the more you should progress by pressing on more resolutely, persevering more joyfully, courageously comforted.¹⁴⁶

In Anselm's letter to prior Ernulf, written some 21 years later in 1104, illustrates the consistent thread to be found throughout the chronological breadth of the letter collection. Anselm further clarifies the distinction of long term and short-term intent by explaining that man ought never to intend evil and cause evil for a future intention that would be good were it to occur. He places this in a pragmatic context, that of his departure from England. Seemingly there was a degree of dissent within the community at Christ Church, Canterbury, as to whether his actions had been appropriate and warranted. Some who disagreed argued that by leaving he was unable to continue the good works that he had formerly been known to effect. Anselm argues that by staying he would have incurred a greater evil upon others and that it was inappropriate for him to do so even if the evil he brought was less than the evil that occurred by him leaving. In short, man ought not to intend a long term good if it necessitates intending a short term evil.

¹⁴⁶Anselm, Ep. 35 *Esto itaque, dilectissime, sollicitus ut spatium quod restat - quia nescis quam breve est - sic expendas, ut de die in diem sanctum propositum ad meliora extendas. Quatenus quanto magis laborem tuum ad finem festinare et te ad requiem et coronam appropinquare consideras, tanto fortius instando et laetius perseverando viriliter confortatus proficias.*

If the objection is raised that the loss of souls which is seen to happen because of my absence is greater than the temporal evil which would be caused by my presence, and therefore the former should be rejected for the sake of the latter: I have already said that if it should come upon me I would maintain unshaken patience. But since we ought not to do evil in order that good may come, so I ought not to bring any evil on any innocent people so that good may come to the souls of others. In any case, I said last year when they threatened to expel me, that I did not want to leave on account of the pastoral care and obedience laid upon me, but I said this because of those who were threatening this lest I would be leaving merely because of their words, and not because I believed that it would be any use for me to remain. For as soon as discord and rivalry should appear between the King and myself, in like manner bodily evils would boil up and spiritual goods freeze to the core.¹⁴⁷

The manner in which this argument is structured is indicative of Anselm's overarching desire to ensure that situations did not worsen between himself and King Henry I. Indeed, the reason that he provides for the harm were he to stay in the country is that the worst possible harm would be a more severe conflict between the two.

Anselm effectively ties his ethics of intent to his religious views in his letter to Abbot Robert, written during his time as Abbot of Bec. Grace and Divine Wisdom are portrayed as playing active roles in the salvation of the individual, much as they did in *De libertate*. It is remarkable in its attempt to, albeit briefly, differentiate between the ethical conceptions of intention and deed, a distinction that is not fully elucidated in his treatises.

The beginning of the letter itself tells a not uncommon story. Anselm often had cause to remind those who wrote to him that he heavily engaged with the temporal concerns of the

¹⁴⁷ Anselm, Ep. 311 Si obicitur quod maius est damnum animarum quod cognoscitur propter meam absentiam, quam malum temporale quod contingeret per meam praesentiam, et ideo istud propter illud esset contemnendum: iam dixi quia, si super me veniret, inconcussam servarem patientiam. Verum quoniam non debemus facere mala ut veniant bona, non debeo attrahere super quoslibet innocentes quaelibet mala, ut animabus aliorum eveniant bona. Dixi utique in praeterito anno, cum me minarentur expellere, quia nollem exire propter iniunctam mihi curam et oboedientiam; sed hoc dicebam propter illos qui hoc minabantur, ne pro solis verbis illorum exirem, non propter aliquam utiliter remanendi fiduciam. Mox enim ut discordia et contentio inter regem et me appareret, pariter et mala corporalia ferverent et bona spiritualia penitus frigerent.

abbey and therefore did not have as much time for intellectual or spiritual occupations as he desired. This seems to fit into his broader narrative of resenting those worldly duties which took his time away from more eternal concerns. 'I would wish to propose examples and authorities; but hindered by his haste and my engagements, as he can witness, I am barely allowed to state plainly the truth of the matter in question.'¹⁴⁸ The first portion of Anselm's argument is clear, that intent is more important in the assessment of an action than the outcome it produces. Simply because a man rejoices at having been stopped from committing a crime, does not mean that he should not be judged for having intended to commit the crime. This naturally occurs when man dies, he continues, as God judges man for intentions even if they are not completed. Having said this, Anselm does stipulate that while not blameless, those that God has deigned to save from fulfilling bad intention are not to be treated as harshly as those who are not. In addition, individuals who are hindered by other earthly concerns once their intention has manifested in action towards an evil goal are to be considered as culpable as those who complete the evil task.

Every prudent Christian knows full well that, just as someone prevented from doing the good deed he intended who later rejoices at having been unable to carry out the good he had intended, is not to be praised for having carried out the good he had planned, in the same way someone who is not permitted to do a wicked deed he had planned, and then rejoices at not having given in to his lust, is in no way to be judged free of the guilt he had intended. If anyone with the intention of committing a crime dies in this state, he is to be judged for it.

The manner in which Anselm speaks of intention makes it clear that he does not consider this a unique facet of his own thought on an ethical Christian life. It is an essential component for all Christians and the manner in which they themselves respond to their own intentions, and outside interference into their actions, is not necessarily as critical as what they had originally intended to occur. Indeed, Anselm adds a level of certainty in terms of God's judgement upon man, by stating that intention, if there is no opportunity to commit the action in question, is the same as action and therefore worthy of judgement. Anselm

¹⁴⁸ Anselm, Ep. 132 *Vellem exempla et auctoritates proponere; sed eius festinatione et mea occupatione, sicut ipse testis est, impediante, vix mihi licet rei ipsius veritatem simpliciter exponere.*

continues by making an allowance for the intercession of grace as opposed to simple inability that comes about through any other source:

There is, however, a great difference between someone whom the anger of the supreme Judge abandons even on the verge of an evil deed and someone whom grace leads back from the precipice to the full intention of doing service. Greatly to be reproached, therefore, is anyone who tries to assign guilt in equal measure to those whose wicked wills Divine Wisdom disposes to direct quite differently. For anyone who either stumbles while carrying out an action or is abandoned to a malicious intention is known as a criminal, but not someone who is neither thrown headlong into the work of malice nor dragged down by perverse intention. The first is saved so that he can give thanks, rejoicing; the other is lost so that he must ask pardon grieving. From this it is certain that the former will receive the reward for this joy, and the other is well served if, by the pain of sin, he flees punishment.¹⁴⁹

This distinction is important, both in terms of monastic life in general and as a connection to Anselm's views on teleology. Monks with worldly pasts would not have been uncommon and the distinction between them as individuals who had been led by grace back to the cloister and those still in the world would have been critical for peace in a monastic environment. Equally, allowing for Divine Wisdom to provide ways in which individuals might positively change their lives allows for the salvation of all and ensures that at no point on life's journey are any truly forsaken.

Anselm makes it clear in the final section of the letter that he has much more to say on the matter, but that, as he stated at the beginning, he has not the time to do so. He has clearly instructed the monk William further and mentions to Abbot Robert that William will be able

¹⁴⁹Anselm, Ep. 132 Magna tamen distantia est inter illum, quem ira superni iudicis usque in reprobam actionem deserit, et illum, quem gratia a praecipitio servans operis in bonam voluntatem restituit. Multum igitur est criminandus ille, qui pariter illis crimen conatur impingere, quorum pravas voluntates divina sapientia tam diverse voluit disponere. Ille namque nomine facinoris notandus est, qui aut in actum labitur aut in malitiosa intentione deseritur; non ille, qui nec in opus malitiae praecipitatur et a perversa intentione eruitur. Hic enim in hoc servatus est, unde gaudento gratias possit agere; ille in hoc desertus est, unde dolendo veniam necesse sit petere. De hoc certum est quia pro huiusmodi gaudio praemium accipiet; illi multum est, si pro dolore peccati poenam effugiet.

to add greater clarity. Whether this is in the context of additional oral instruction or whether William will be bringing copies of Anselm's philosophical treatises remains unclear.

Contrary to the examination of intent to be found in Anselm's treatises, his letter of 1104 to Anthony, Subprior of Christ Church Canterbury, examines the practical implications of Anselm's ethics of intent as applied to day to day monastic life.

After beginning with praise for the good actions which Anthony performs, and assuring him that he will be justly rewarded by God for his good intention, Anselm then moves on to criticize the rumoured harm. In previous letters, Anselm is clear that God knows man's intention always, but it is not something that one can always know about other men. When one presumes to do so, harm is caused on a pragmatic level, but in addition Anselm's rebuke smacks of fear that Anthony is usurping a will greater than his own by presuming that he can understand the intent of those in his care. Anselm makes the point that many actions are difficult to judge as the distinction between evil intent and mere carelessness can be hard to assess for all who are not God. He furthers this point by admonishing Anthony not to possess 'improper suspicion' and that the way an individual looks and glances cannot be interpreted necessarily as a sign of 'malice'. Anselm acknowledges that, at times, 'sins of carelessness' can occur and that, while such sins ought to be punished and corrected, they are by no means as severe as examples of sins in which individuals intended to cause harm. It is easy to imagine how such a situation might arise in any monastic, or indeed, any communal setting, and Anselm's characterisation of such occurrences lends substantial weight to the argument that he intended his ethical thought to possess practical application.

Even then, Anselm seems to take his argument for care and compassion a step further, removing intent from the domain of earthly judgement once more. Sins which do not constitute a violation of the rule are looked upon as a matter for God's judgement, and to be treated comparatively lightly in the monastic setting. Harsh punishment is dissuaded and, much as we shall see in a future example, Anselm emphasises love over absolute punishment, stipulating that it is the only way to ensure that the brothers are able to heal themselves without the feeling of shame.

Anselm's letter to Robert and the Nuns under his guidance, written between 1106 and 1109, provides one of the most complete discussions of how good intention interacts with will and the good life to be found in Anselm's letters. Written towards the end of Anselm's life, it incorporates and integrates most of the elements of his ethical philosophy. The reason for this may be that he had recently returned to such themes in *De concordia* and *Cur deus homo*, or this may simply have been an example of Anselm wishing to provide holistic guidance. Certainly the letter, while more complete than earlier examples, does not present the reader with unexpected or contradictory material to earlier epistles. Anselm begins in characteristic fashion, praising the holy intention and manner of living within the nunnery and especially Robert, for teaching them good living. This is phrased as 'according to the will of God', which will become important later in the letter. It is worth noting that Anselm separates out holy intention and holy way of life in this context to further distinguish between intention and action:

I REJOICE AND GIVE THANKS TO GOD for the holy intention and holy way of life you are leading together in the love of God and in holiness of life...¹⁵⁰

After completing such pleasantries, Anselm begins to address the nub of his point. He begins with the bold statement that the only important aspect of action is its intention. As in his letter to Abbot Robert, of some twenty years before, he states that even if a man is unable to complete an action, that action will still be judged as God only judges man based on his will and therefore upon how closely man's will corresponds to God's. The nuns are then admonished not to consider only their deeds, but rather the intention behind their deeds, for, all 'right' actions are 'right' only because of their intention and vice versa. A man is characterised as being judged just or unjust on the basis of his intention alone:

My dearest daughters, every action, whether praiseworthy or blameworthy, earns praise or blame according to the intention behind it. For the root and principle of all

¹⁵⁰Frohlich has here translated 'proposito' as intention, when 'purpose' might have been more accurate. This distinction has little bearing in the current discussion as an intention must be willed and therefore the purpose and the intention cannot be easily separated in Anselm's letters.; Anselm, Ep. 414 Gaudeo et gratias ago deo de sancto proposito et sancta conversatione, quam invicem habetis in dilectione dei et vitae sanctitate...

actions that are in our own power lie in the will, and even if we cannot do what we wish, yet each of us is judged before God according to his will.¹⁵¹

This may seem, initially, to be an abstract point, but Anselm goes on to explain that it has critical implications to not only how an individual ought to live, but more broadly to how individuals ought to conceptualise ethical issues that arise in day to day life. The language presented is one of teleological concern, showing the nuns that if they truly wish to live a good life then a continuous examination of how their intents may appear before the judgement of God is a critical facet.

Do not therefore consider only what your deeds may be but what your intention is. For every action which is done rightly, that is to say with a just intention, is right, and whatever is done without a right intention is not right. The man with a just intention is called just, one with an unjust intention is called unjust.¹⁵²

Anselm makes it explicitly clear that an action, however good the result might be, is unjust if the intention behind that action is not in and of itself just. Perhaps more than any other passage this highlights the primacy placed by Anselm upon ethics of intent and the level to which he expected others to incorporate this ethical schema into their day to day lives as a way in which to evaluate their own behaviour.

Therefore, if you wish to live a good life, continually keep watch over your will in both great and small things, in those things subject to your power and in those over which you have no control, so that your will may not deviate from righteousness in any way.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹Anselm, Ep. 414 *Filiae carissimae*, omnis actio laudabilis sive reprehensibilis ex voluntate habet laudem vel reprehensionem. Ex voluntate namque est radix et principium omnium actionum, quae sunt in nostra potestate; et si non possumus quod volumus, iudicatur tamen coram deo unusquisque de propria voluntate.

¹⁵²Anselm, Ep. 414 *Nolite igitur considerare tantum quid faciatis, sed quid velitis; non tantum quae sint opera vestra, quantum quae sit voluntas vestra. Omnis enim actio quae fit recta, id est iusta voluntate, recta est; et quae fit non recta voluntate, recta non est.*

¹⁵³Anselm, Ep. 414 *Si ergo bene vultis vivere, voluntatem vestram indesinenter custodite, in magnis et in minimis, in iis quae potestati vestrae subiacent et in iis quae non potestis, ne aliquatenus a rectitudine declinet.*

This is rapidly followed by the assessment of power to accomplish a task as unimportant in comparison to the intention behind the action. Even if man is unable to accomplish the correct action, he ought to intend for it to occur. He reiterates a point which will be examined in the next chapter; that because it is intention that is critical, the size of the action, or matter at hand, is not always relevant to how ethical a man may be. After establishing that intention is critical for the good ethical life and thus for the maintenance of righteousness, Anselm proceeds to inform the nuns how they are able to know if their intent is correct:

If you wish to know whether your intention is right: what is subject to the will of God is certainly right. Whenever you plan or think of doing anything great or small, speak thus in your hearts: 'Does God want me to want this or not?' If your conscience answers: 'Yes, God does want me to want this and such an intention pleases him', then whether you are able to do what you want or not, cherish that intention. If, however, your conscience tells you that God does not want you to have that intention, then turn your heart away from it with all your might. If you want to drive it completely away from you, exclude the memory and thought of it from your heart as far as you can.¹⁵⁴

Once more we see Anselm aligning individual intention with God's will and Anselm's prior statements about the manner in which man can lead a good life. In this instance, the link between the two is at its most literal. Man must ask himself whether his intention aligns with what God wants and if such an intention pleases God. Rather like a medieval form of the recent 'What would Jesus do?' trend. Yet ensuring that your actions align with God's will is only a portion of the task of ensuring that your will acquiesces with God's in every way. Such thoughts and feelings that are inappropriate ought to be driven away completely by excluding them as best as the individual is able. In the following section, Anselm provides more explicit instructions:

¹⁵⁴Anselm, Ep. 414 Si autem vultis cognoscere quae vestra voluntas sit recta: illa pro certo est recta, quae subiacet voluntati dei. Cum ergo aliquid magnum vel parvum facere disponitis vel cogitatis, ita dicite in cordibus vestris: Vult deus ut hoc velim, an non? Si vobis respondet conscientia vestra: vere vult deus ut hoc velim, et placet illi talis voluntas: tunc, sive possitis sive non possitis quod vultis, voluntatem tamen amate. Si autem conscientia vestra vobis testatur quia deus non vult vos illam habere voluntatem: tunc toto conatu avertite ab illa cor vestrum; et si bene illam a vobis vultis expellere, in quantum potestis, eius cogitationem et memoriam a corde excludite.

Do not struggle with wicked thoughts or with a wicked intention, but when they molest you do your utmost to occupy your mind with some useful thought and intention until they disappear. For no thought or intention is ever driven out of your heart except by some other thought or intention which does not agree with it.¹⁵⁵

The return to a discussion of the wicked and the good, in terms of thoughts that cross the human mind is reminiscent of Anselm's discussion of the two wills. All humans will, naturally, be compelled towards actions that are ethically bad and, indeed, sinful. It is the conscious negation of these impulses, the free choice towards a greater good through God that allows the individual to act in an ethically good fashion. The nuns, therefore, ought not to be perturbed by the very existence of these thoughts, after all, they come to all individuals, but rather, they must develop the mind-set to dispel them and choose their actions appropriately. In this instance the appropriate course of action is a form of negation.

It is only through turning man's intention to something good that he is able to turn away from and to banish intentions that are inappropriate. This, according to Anselm, is more productive than struggling with wicked thoughts which can only be removed when they are replaced by positive or 'useful' thoughts. To this end, Anselm recommends prayers and meditations as a manner of banishing them. It is worth noting that even in this example, and removed from the abstraction of his ethical philosophy and discussions of the will, Anselm is not perturbed that such thoughts and negative intentions exist in the nuns in and of themselves. He writes in a manner that makes it clear that all will battle against them and as such, one ought not to be ashamed of them. Indeed, Anselm goes a step further. Rather than becoming sad or ashamed by such thoughts, as doing so can keep them present or help them increase, one must take positive action and use them as a form of inspiration in order to spur the self on to greater goods. The greatest danger that they possess is that the devil

¹⁵⁵Anselm, Ep. 414 *Nolite litigare cum perversis cogitationibus vel perversa voluntate; sed cum vobis infestae sunt, aliqua utili cogitatione et voluntate mentem vestram, donec illae evanescant, fortiter occupate. Numquam enim expellitur de corde cogitatio vel voluntas, nisi alia cogitatione et alia voluntate, quae illis non concordat.*

may use them to hijack good ethical actions when such actions are incomplete - a danger which, according to Anselm, ought to be watched for in constant readiness.

Up to this point in the letter, Anselm has maintained a relatively philosophical demeanour and it is noteworthy that he uses the remainder of the letter in scriptural justification. His use of Galatians 5:17 is particularly important as it shows the scriptural basis of his theory of the two types of will.

A person zealous in the pursuit of a holy intention should behave in the same way in the face of any unbecoming emotion of the body or the soul, such as the sting in the flesh¹⁵⁶ of anger or envy or vainglory. For such feelings are most easily quenched when we refuse to indulge them or to think about them or to carry out anything at their suggestion. Do not fear that such emotions or thoughts will be imputed to you as sin as long as your intention does not associate itself with them on any account, because there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh.¹⁵⁷ For to walk according to the flesh is to give in to the will of the flesh. The Apostle, however, calls every vicious emotion in soul or body 'flesh' when he says: The flesh lusts against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh.¹⁵⁸ We easily quench such suggestions if, according to the advice given above, we crush them when they first start. But it is difficult to do so once we have admitted their heads into our minds.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ 2 Co 12:7.

¹⁵⁷ Rm 8:1.

¹⁵⁸ Gal 5:17.

¹⁵⁹ Anselm, Ep. 414 Similiter se debet habere persona in sancto proposito studiosa in quolibet motu indecente in corpore vel anima, sicuti est stimulus carnis aut irae aut invidiae aut inanis gloriae. Tunc enim facillime exstinguuntur, cum et illos velle sentire, aut de illis cogitare, aut aliquid illorum suasionem facere dedignamur. Neque timeatis quod huiusmodi motus vel cogitationes vobis ad peccatum imputentur, si nullatenus voluntas vestra illis se associat, quoniam "nihil" "damnationis est iis, qui sunt in Christo IESU, qui non secundum carnem ambulant". Secundum carnem enim ambulare est: carni voluntate concordare. 'Carnem' autem vocat apostolus omnem vitiosum motum in anima vel corpore, cum dicit: "caro concupiscit adversus spiritum, spiritus autem adversus carnem". Facile quidem huiusmodi suggestiones exstinguimus, si principium earum secundum praedictum consilium conterimus. Difficile vero, postquam caput earum intra mentem admittimus.

Much as he did in his philosophical treatises [cite], Anselm makes it clear that base emotions and desires of the flesh are not in and of themselves sinful. However, the manner in which we respond and the intention behind that response is the key to whether they are to be considered against us or not. The key is to 'refuse to indulge' in them and to 'quench' them as quickly as possible. He ends the section with the admission that such tasks are often difficult to accomplish appropriately but with the caveat that they grow increasingly difficult as we allow them to occur. The letter finishes with a further admonition to persevere in holy and, on this occasion, pious intention. There is a reminder of the benefits for the individual of this sort of behaviour, given with the disclaimer that it is not perfection that is likely to be attained, but rather progress to be constantly sought.

The last example in this chapter provides an early example of Anselm using almost every element of his ethical philosophy to give advice to Abbot Paul on the running of his monastery in the summer of 1077. This is important on several levels. Primarily it provides evidence that Anselm's main conception of ethical philosophy changed little between his earlier works and his death. It also shows that Anselm intended his abstract ethical philosophies to be coherent and meaningful in normative situations. Anselm begins with a firm reiteration of the principles behind the ethics of intent. What is private to men is open to God and as Abbot Paul has shown to God through his good intention that he is an ethically good individual, God has enabled him to progress to a public display through a position of power in order to allow him to help others in their intentions. These intentions are key in 'the narrow path of virtue from earth to heaven', or, as this thesis has been showing, a normative journey from the temporal to the eternal. Anselm's use of virtue in such contexts will be viewed in greater depth in the following chapter. Such an elevation (in becoming an abbot) is a cause for rejoicing, according to Anselm, not only for the promises it makes in the eternal, but the opportunity to provide others with a chance to possess similar joys.

Paul is evidently concerned about his fitness for this particular abbey, as he seems to not speak the same language as the other monks. Anselm, however, dismisses this concern. An individual's good actions and intentions convince others more forcefully than any spoken words and good habits (in this case it can be taken to mean virtues) will grow to be loved in a man who does not speak beyond powerful words in one who is ethically lax.

Rather than simply maintaining a harsh justice of ethical imperatives, Anselm tells Paul that he must seek to be loved through ‘gentleness and mercy’ and as a ‘father and a shepherd’ reflecting an approach to interaction stipulated on a variety of virtues in differing measure and with intentions appropriately reflecting God’s love and the love of God. This is directly contrasted with the fear that the monks may have felt, that Paul would turn out to be a ‘tyrant and an extortioner.’ In time, Anselm feels, the monk’s will derive joy from such treatment and from Paul’s character. When they do their concern about his origin and language will be assuaged.

In the following section Anselm goes further in his description of what can happen to those whose intention is not ruled by love as Anselm set forth in his anthropology, but rather by other conceptions of what one ought to do that do not adhere to intending what is right for its own sake. By starting from a position of fear, for example, for the laxity of their contemporaries, ‘God’s law is destroyed in their hearts’. Further examples follow:

There are many prelates of our order who, fearing that God’s cause will be ruined in their hands, behave in such a way that God’s law is destroyed in their hearts.¹⁶⁰ They try so hard to be wise for fear of being cheated by others that they become cunning at cheating others. They try so hard to be cautious for fear of being too generous and squandering unwisely what they possess that they become misers and what they have saved rots uselessly away. They are always trying so hard to procure something for God’s servants and the poor and for his holy place that they are always deceitfully attempting to extort something from somebody. They are so animated with zeal for correcting the foolish that they burn with cruelty or with greed for collecting money.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ Ps 118:126.

¹⁶¹ Anselm, Ep. 80 *Sunt enim multi praelati nostri ordinis, qui quasi solliciti ne destruantur res dei in manibus eorum, agunt ut dissipetur lex dei in cordibus eorum. Nam tantum conantur esse prudentes ne decipiantur ab aliis, ut fiant astuti ad decipiendum alios. Adeo sunt cauti ne fiant prodigi et quae habent irrationabiliter perdant, ut avari fiant et quae servant inutiliter putrescant. Sic studiose servis et pauperibus dei et sancto loco semper satagunt aliquid acquirere, ut dolose semper alicui tentent aliquid auferre. Sic animantur zelo corrigendi stultos, ut accendantur crudelitate aut cupidine colligendi nummos.*

As such, an inappropriate intent can become a vehicle towards vice, even in those who wish, on one level, to do what is best. This would seem to be the motivation for Anselm's refusal throughout to allow for the possibility of an individual initially committing a bad ethical action for the sake of a higher good. If a habit is formed, or the character of the individual is allowed to slip, then the harms that can be caused in time are detrimental not only to that individual, but to all those in the community.

Anselm begins the section by telling Paul how he is able to combat such difficulties. Unsurprisingly it is phrased in the language of Anselm's ethics of intent. He must ensure that he is inwardly adhering to God's Law. He must with 'single-mindedness... intend harm to no one'.

All this, then, your prudence should diligently beware of. Arrange the public matters entrusted to you in such a way that your interior disposition conforms to divine precepts and your mind always says to God: Let my sentence come forth from your presence.¹⁶² Against those who would harm you defend yourself through prudence so that by your single-mindedness you intend harm to no one; as it is written Be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.¹⁶³ So guard the possessions of your monastery that you do not forget what is written: Someone who possesses the goods of this world and sees his brother in need and shuts off his compassion towards him, how can the love of God dwell in him?¹⁶⁴ And also: Give and it shall be given unto you.¹⁶⁵ Take the trouble to increase these very possessions without banishing from your mind Thou shalt not covet thy neighbours goods.¹⁶⁶ Censure sinners in a way that involves neither cruelty nor greed, for it is written: If a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual restore him in a spirit of meekness, taking

¹⁶² Ps 16:2.

¹⁶³ Mt 10:16.

¹⁶⁴ 1 Jn 3:7.

¹⁶⁵ Lk 6:38.

¹⁶⁶ Ex 20:17.

care of yourselves lest you also should be tempted.¹⁶⁷ And the covetous... will not inherit the kingdom of God.¹⁶⁸

As we saw in the previous example, the majority of the scriptural references are to be found in the final substantive section of the letter. Paul is warned repeatedly not to be covetous, showing Anselm's concern about his feelings and their impact upon his ethical well-being. In a comprehensive letter, Anselm has run the gamut from the temporal, in terms of how best to run an Abbey and how to ensure cohesion amongst those living there, to the eternal, in terms of how even small slips in intention and living the good life can lead to damnation and harm. It is clear that, for Anselm, these are not disparate matters, but rather form a part of a vast whole. A complex path that every abbot, and indeed all individuals, are forced to navigate in their day to day lives.

Ethics of intent clearly played a major role in the assessment of ethical goodness in Anselm's ethical philosophy. Not only were they a critical facet of the manner in which God was able to judge the actions of man, but so too were they a way for individuals to examine and improve their own approach to leading the good life. Anselm makes it clear that it is never appropriate for man to intend evil, even if evil is only intended in order that a greater good might eventually be achieved. The striking resemblance between Anselm's account of the two wills in his treatises and his exhortations to his correspondents provides further evidence of the integration of Anselm's thought as a whole, not in the least because of the clarity and similarity of his account of the ethics of intent to a variety of different recipients during various stages of his life. The manner in which he writes about such ideas indicates

¹⁶⁷ Gal 6:1.

¹⁶⁸ 1 Cor 6:10; Anselm, Ep. 80 Haec igitur vestra prudentia sollicitè caveat. Ita exteriora vobis commissa disponite, ut interiora vestra mandata dei disponant et semper mens vestra dicat deo: "De vultu tuo iudicium meum prodeat". Sic vos defendite per prudentiam a nocentibus, ut per simplicitatem nulli velitis nocere, sicut scriptum est: "Estote prudentes sicut serpentes, et simplices sicut columbae". Sic custodite res monasterii vestri, ut non obliviscamini quod scriptum est: "Si quis habens substantiam mundi viderit fratrem suum necessitatem habere et clausit viscera sua ab eo: quomodo caritas dei manet in eo?" Et: "Date et dabitur vobis". Sic easdem res augere curate, ut a mente non excidat: "non concupisces" rem "proximi tui". Taliter peccantes arguite, ut nec crudelitas assit nec avaritia, quia scriptum est: "Si praeoccupatus fuerit homo in aliquo delicto, vos qui spirituales estis, huiusmodi instruite in spiritu lenitatis, considerans te ipsum, ne et tu tenteris". Et: "Neque avari" "regnum dei possidebunt".

that, for Anselm at least, they were not controversial or unique, but rather an integral part of ethical behaviour that was part of the intellectual milieu of the time period.

Anselm and Virtue Ethics

Although Anselm's ethics of intent were a critical facet of his ethical philosophy, they prove insufficient in providing adequate guidance on a practical level. Not only is it not possible for men to judge the intent of other men, but also there were situations in which an individual might possess good ethical intent but still not be sure of the appropriate course of action. In a temporal ethical landscape, in which man's greatest assistance in determining God's will are the Holy Scriptures and his own reason as a way of interpreting and understanding such texts assistance is often needed. That, for Anselm, is where a language of virtue and vice can be a useful lens through which to view the world. As such, Anselm speaks of two types of virtues, or perhaps more accurately, virtues in two different contexts. The first are those that assist us in understanding the will of God, for example, wisdom. The second context is that of day to day living, for instance, pride. This division is somewhat artificial however, and though it may seem to initially affect use, it in no way affects substance.

In his letter collection, Anselm often uses discussions of virtue and vice as motivational tools to inspire greater devotion or in the maintenance or praise of a pre-existent trait. There is a sense in which he uses such language to push the educated towards greater heights and to inspire the uneducated towards the divine, especially as his range in the treatment of such statements is substantial varying from the theological to the philosophical and the simple to the complex.

Anselm's use of the language of virtue and vice occurs throughout his letter and, accordingly, is not particularly dependent upon external factors. This contributes to the argument that it was a critical component of his ethical vocabulary and therefore ought to be considered an important aspect of his ethical philosophy and therefore his normative voice. The examples chosen for this chapter illustrate the breadth of his use of the language of virtue and vice, but do not include Anselm's letters to kings and princes, which will be dealt with in the chapter on Anselm, kings, and princes.

Anselm's letters rarely mention virtue in terms of a single isolated act, but rather, they contain numerous references to the virtuous life or progress towards virtue. The first letter

which will be discussed exemplifies a number of the themes that will be addressed in this chapter in a clear and straightforward fashion. Anselm, writing to Gundulf the Monk in c1071, writes of the 'habitual practice of virtue and habitual love' leaving the reader in no doubt about his links between virtue ethics and his wider thought about the teleology of the individual, whose created purpose is to love. This is further strengthened by references in the following lines to the happiness or 'inward affection' that he who 'advances in fulfilling his intention' attains.

And so may the habitual practice of virtue and habitual love so affect, as if by intoxication, your mind, that your spirit may not only savor the inward affection in any deed you occasion, but also be amazed at anyone who cannot experience this same intoxication in himself. For it is clear to anyone intending to live this way that the further he advances in fulfilling his intention, the less likely he will be to curry the favour of his admirers and the more he will be astounded at the error of his followers.¹⁶⁹

The last two lines provide us with an intriguing warning about the reception that a virtuous individual can expect from those around him. This demonstrates the strain of the temporal and the eternal once more. A man may lose earthly admiration by living a virtuous life, but he gains progress towards his true purpose, a trade of which Anselm no doubt approved.

In the spring of 1095, Anselm wrote to the Monks of Bec using some of the most emotive language about the desire for living a virtuous life to be found in his letter collection. Anselm uses 'inspired' and 'zeal' here to show the desirability of virtue and ends by emphasising its goal: the 'peace of eternal life'. Eternal peace is contrasted with a troubled temporal existence, in this instance to offset the rigorous nature of the monastic rule.

For I hear that, inspired and aided by the grace of God you are burning with zeal for living a virtuous life, and under the pressure of poverty you are holding on undeterred to the severity of your order. In fact it is fitting for God's servants that

¹⁶⁹Anselm, Ep. 7 Sic que mentem tuam familiaris virtutum consuetudo et consuetus amor quasi inebriando afficiat, ut non solum quidquid in actionem deprompseris internum affectum sapiat, sed vel posse quemquam eandem ebrietatem non sentire in se animus in te stupeat. Cui enim tale vivendi constat esse propositum: quo amplius in proposito succedit profectus, eo liberius non tantum admirantium favorem sectatur quantum sectantium errorem miratur.

the more the troubles of the present life hem them in, the more fervently they should strive towards the peace of eternal life and strain towards advancing in virtues.¹⁷⁰

Anselm makes it clear that such progress is hard-won and that there are many deterrents to living a virtuous life. Yet, as his letter of c1095/96 to Walter, the Prior of St Wandrille shows, as long as perseverance (a virtue) was maintained help could be obtained and rewards could be won. In this instance, Anselm is writing to thank Walter for his assistance in helping a fellow monk towards virtue. The comparison with illness, most likely taken from Lk 5:31, is significant. It is Anselm's way of saying that, while difficult, virtue can be gained by those who have forsaken virtue or who were never virtuous, in much the same way that a sick man might be healed. Moreover, the comparison with the physician is a strong statement about the role that monastic superiors ought to play in the cloistered life. Not only are they there to guide those who are not full of vice to greater virtue, but also to gradually wean those who are vicious from their harmful ways.

This is why I give thanks with love, with my thanks I praise, and praising I beseech your discretion that, mindful that a bruised reed should not be broken,¹⁷¹ and that they who are whole do not need a physician but they who are sick,¹⁷² you should persevere in what you have begun. It is to be expected that someone who has already made some progress through your tolerance and by the help of God's mercy, will progress through your tolerance and by the help of God's mercy, will progress to even greater virtues through the same mercy of God if you persevere in doing what you started... not that you should consent to his vices but that you should be lenient towards his weakness so that he may gradually be relieved of them like a sick man. For he does not yet dare promise to give up entirely in the near future the bad habits in which he was reared in a way not advantageous to him; but he does promise with

¹⁷⁰ Fröhlich often translates phrases such as 'bene vivendi' in terms of virtue. While this may appear inaccurate, the context within Anselm's letters supports his useage. As this chapter will provide substantial analysis of 'virtue' and 'the good life' as intertwined, it has not been necessary to emend his translations.; Anselm, Ep. 199 *Audio enim quia gratia dei inspirante et cooperante in studio bene vivendi fervetis et in paupertatis pressura rigorem vestri ordinis inflexibiliter tenetis. Sic etenim decet servos dei, ut, quanto magis eos tribulationes praesentis vitae angustant, tanto ardentius ad quietem aeternae vitae tendant et se ad virtutum profectum extendant.*

¹⁷¹ Cf. Is 42:3 and Mt 12:20.

¹⁷² Cf. Lk 5:31.

will and longing that whenever he slides back he will, with God's help and your assistance and advice, as well as your prayers, get up again and one day will stand firm in the practice of virtue.¹⁷³

Anselm returns to his theme of sickness towards the end of the letter and compares the process of healing more strongly with the development of virtue. Just as a man who is ill cannot expect to be healed instantly, here Anselm expects the individual in question to struggle towards the virtuous life. It is acknowledged that his vices cannot be immediately dispensed with and that even when they have ceased, the view must be taken that the path to virtue will require assistance from other monks and a great deal of time. The tolerance of vice of which Anselm speaks is comparable to the allowances made in monastic rules for additional food for those who are ill. The monk should not be judged by his behaviour outright, but rather by the progress that he makes in moving towards greater virtue and the virtuous life.

Anselm provides a strong parallel between the loss of uprightness of will and the difficulties involved in attaining it once more and the loss of virtue. Throughout the present chapter, it will be clear that Anselm views the virtuous life as a precarious state, from which one may fall through simple negligence in the smallest of matters. The two examples below represent a small portion of those that might be included, but have been selected as they provide the clearest statements of such a sentiment. Later in this chapter, there will be a discussion specifically in relation to monastic laws and stringencies over minor contraventions which will serve to further establish this point.

¹⁷³Anselm, Ep. 143 Unde ego cum amore gratias ago et cum gratiarum actione laudo et laudando precor discretionem vestram, ut memor quia calamus quassatus non est conterendus, et quia "sani non egent medico, sed qui male habent": in hoc quod incepit perseveret. Sperandum enim est quoniam, qui per vestram tolerantiam iam aliquatenus misericordia dei efficiente profecit, si in eo quod incepistis perseveraveritis, per eandem dei misericordiam ad maiora proficiet. Nam hoc ipsum magnum signum est profectus eius quia illi, per quem se profecisse cognoscit, multum commendari per me, amicum vestrum, desiderat; non ut vitiis suis consentiatis, sed ut infirmitati eius, ut ab illis paulatim sicut aeger levetur, condescendatis. Nondum enim audet promittere se mores suos, in quibus aliter quam expediebat nutritus est, in proximo penitus deserturum; sed cum voluntate et desiderio promittit, quotiens ceciderit, se deo adiuvante per vestrum auxilium et consilium et per vestra orationes surrecturum et quandoque in bonis moribus constanter staturum.

The emphasis on the maintenance of virtue is given through the language of physical exertion which is contrasted by the losing of virtue through 'idleness'. In this letter specifically, written to the monks Herluin, Gundulf, and Maurice c1074/75, the emphasis on the physicality of the attainment of virtue can be seen to be a direct result of the monastic setting, and the final line is revealing when it speaks of being unable to add to virtue through 'infirmity'.

As, in the case of virtue, it is more difficult to gain by effort something which has been lacking than it is to lose it by idleness, so it is more difficult to recover what has been lost by negligence than to acquire what one has not yet been known to possess. Therefore, dearly beloved, always consider what is past as nothing, so you do not fail to hold on to those virtues you have attained; and even if you are unable, through infirmity, to add anything to them, always strive to do so by persistent effort.¹⁷⁴

By telling the monk to strive to greater virtue, even if he is physically unable to do so, Anselm is linking his virtue ethics firmly with his ethics of intent and showing that they are both critical elements of his teleology.

This stance is furthered by the next example, written to the Nun M. in c1094/95:

Consequently, most delightful daughter, let no progress in virtue satisfy your heart, but let it continually strive to progress to even greater things. For nobody can avoid falling back except one who always strains towards progress.¹⁷⁵

Not only must one continually strive for greater virtue in order to advance towards it, but if one neglects to do so then one will be in constant danger of falling into vice. Without strong intention and purposed action, as was discussed when evaluating Anselm's philosophical

¹⁷⁴ Anselm, Ep. 51 Sicut enim in virtutibus difficilius est aliquid non habitum conando assequi quam desidia carere: ita gravius est recuperare quod per negligentiam amittitur, quam adipisci quod nondum quis habuisse cognoscitur. Semper igitur, dilectissimi, praeterita quasi pro nihilo sic deputetis, ut et illa ad quae profecistis tenere non contemnatis; et iis aliquid addere, licet per infirmitatem nequeatis, tamen per importunitatem semper contendatis.

¹⁷⁵ Anselm, Ep. 184 Nullus igitur, filia dulcissima, virtutum profectus cordi tuo sufficiat, quin semper ad maiora proficere studeat. Nullus enim potest vitare defectum, nisi qui se semper extendit ad profectum.

treatises, good ethical action over an extended period of time, and therefore the life of virtue, is not possible.

A key component of the difficulties involved in becoming and remaining virtuous is that virtue does not necessarily breed temporal popularity, particularly amongst those who are full of vice. Both of the examples in this section are characterized by Anselm's desire to intertwine his ethical philosophy with pragmatic circumstances. In both instances the eternal rewards of virtue and virtuous behaviour are referenced as a compensatory factor for unpleasantness suffered. As such, Anselm is able to show the value of virtue moving towards the eternal while showing scorn for the temporal as a world of vice. The individual, therefore, must look to their own ethical action and use it to guard against such attacks. Anselm's language pairings are an important aspect of his argument. In his letter of c1075/76 to Prior Henry of Christ Church Canterbury he twins opposites such as 'glory and dishonour' in such a way as to enable the reader to consider that what is glorious to the temporal might be dishonourable to the eternal and *vice versa*. Such trust in the truth of the path towards God is the only way to destroy temporal 'snares' and to avoid false truths that might be hidden along the way.

By characterising those who oppose virtue as jealous, Anselm is immediately making a clear distinction of those who follow or value virtue as virtuous and those who have negative feelings towards those who do as vicious. Critical to Anselm's use of this analysis is his statement that 'vice always envies virtue' as it shows that vice builds upon vice in the mind of the vicious. Suffering the jealousy of such individuals is inevitable as they can be found wherever there are men. The only ways, then, to avoid such consternation is to renounce one's own virtues. Yet, as Anselm points out, this course of action is 'detestable'. Instead Anselm develops a common theme, stipulating that it is through tribulation that opportunities to be virtuous arise.

The ending of the paragraph is worthy of consideration:

Hence, in this matter you should be on your guard, as befits a perfect servant of God, lest, rejoicing in the enemies' confusion you censure them for it, by censuring you preach about it, by preaching you publicize it, by publicizing you augment it, and,

you be judged in God's sight as taking delight in the punishment of the enemy. Rejoice, therefore, in your heart of hearts, becoming free in God's sight by giving him thanks; ignore their sin and its outcome by praying for them with a gentle mind.¹⁷⁶

Even in victory over those who would be jealous, envious, and accusatory towards us we must be careful in how we respond, lest they drag us from the path of virtue simply by their own acts of sin. In a further reference to *De libertate arbitrii*, Anselm mentions the individual 'becoming free' through good ethical action in the face of persecution, in this instance by praying for the persecutors. For this opportunity one ought to rejoice, as Anselm points out in the final sentence.

In the next portion of the letter Anselm moves from general statements about the nature of the relation between those who are virtuous and those who are vicious and gives specific advice on the situation in hand. This is presented as ethical advice on ways to remain constant and may well be seen as an exhortation to hope and perseverance more than general instructions. The virtue of patience is stipulated as the key to overcoming tribulation for, without tribulation, patience would never exist or be required. Once more he uses imagery of eternal glory, on this occasion backed up with biblical quotations indicating that it can only be attained through virtuous behaviour. Therefore, trials of our virtue, and indeed, being despised for the sake of virtue are to be viewed as opportunities to improve our virtue. Moreover, Anselm goes a step further in this instance. He likens the tribulations to being assailed by the devil and emphasises that it is only through virtue that he can be defeated.

The second example in this section, written to Gerard, Archbishop of York in 1105/06, provides a glimpse of the integration in Anselm's normative philosophy – in this instance displayed by his virtue ethics interacting with a pragmatic view on a highly charged political scenario. The suffering caused by adversity and tribulations is once more a matter for

¹⁷⁶Anselm, Ep. 63 In quo tamen sollicite vos, sicut decet perfectum servum dei, observare oportet ne inimicorum confusione gaudentes eam exprobretis, exprobrando praedicetis, praedicando divulgatis, divulgando augeatis, ne in conspectu dei ultione inimicorum delectari iudicemini. De vestra igitur liberatione in secreto mentis in conspectu dei gratias illi agendo gaudete; illorum vero peccatum sive eventum pro illis orando miti mente dissimulate.

rejoicing, when defeated by appropriate virtue. This is further contextualised through Anselm's ethical thought through reminders to good intention and perseverance in a teleological sense.

FOR THE TRIBULATIONS which your charity suffered after I left England I bear due compassion in my mind, although at the moment I cannot show you any consolation by my deeds. I understand through the words of many people and from your letters that your will has been enkindled by zeal for God against the evils which rage and grow exceedingly in the Church of God. Just as I suffer with you in adversity, so I rejoice with you in virtue. Therefore I beseech and admonish you that neither constancy nor the perseverance to attain to perfection may be lacking in your good intention. For to what purpose are we placed as bishops over the people¹⁷⁷ of God if, like dogs unable to bark, we remain dumb?¹⁷⁸

In the final sentence Anselm comes to the heart of the matter. As bishops, Gerard and Anselm have a ethical responsibility to strive towards what is ethically good not only for themselves, but also for their flocks. This necessarily informs their interactions with the King and causes conflict when the King does not act in a manner which is favourable to such aims.

I hope in God that our lord the King, as he himself promised me by the inspiration of God, will approach us as helper in everything good, and that if God deigns to accomplish the agreement which he has begun between him and me, the King will not retreat from our advice in those matters which pertain to our rank. Therefore I

¹⁷⁷ See Heb 5:1.

¹⁷⁸ Is 56:10; Anselm, Ep. 372 Caritati vestrae pro tribulationibus quas passa est, postquam de Anglia exivi, quamvis opere nequeam exhibere ad praesens consolationem, mente tamen debitam gero compassionem. Quod autem et verbis per multos et vestris litteris vestram voluntatem zelo dei accendi contra mala, quae in ecclesia dei fervent et pullulant, intelligo: sicut in adversitate condoleo, ita in virtute congaudeo. Precor itaque et moneo, ut in bono proposito non desit constantia neque usque ad perfectionem pertingens perseverantia. Ad quid enim sumus episcopi super populum dei constituti, si quasi "canes" "non valentes latrare" permanemus "muti"?

shall do nothing about our business at the moment until I learn the Apostolic decision which I am expecting shortly.¹⁷⁹

Such a sentiment is reiterated in the final paragraph of the letter with the added concept of the King also having responsibility to follow his spiritual leaders in the dissemination of virtue. Virtue can therefore be seen as both the cause and solution in a number of temporal conflicts.

As was shown in the last section virtue is deemed important for leaders of the church to spread in the secular community, so too is it a critical facet in the smooth running of any monastic community. As the next two examples will show, the level of specificity with which Anselm delves into this issue increases in his later years. Most likely this is due to the anecdotal nature of these examples and his increased experience with a variety of monastic environments over time.

In 1094 Anselm sent a letter to Baldric, Prior of Bec, which is best described as a cautionary comment designed to exhort the members of the monastery to greater zeal and fervency in their adherence to their Rule, yet it establishes Anselm's point succinctly. His sentiment is similar to his treatments of obedience and peace which he clearly sees vice as disrupting.

Indeed it is certain, and a fact frequently known by experience, that a monastery in which subjects criticize the acts of their superior is not cared for by the kind providence of God but is ruined by the abyss of vices and destroyed by disruptive discord.¹⁸⁰

The second example, written to the Monks of Canterbury in 1104 while Anselm was in Lyon, is by far the more specific of the two and provides a more direct link to specific elements of virtue and vice and their effects upon monastic communities. It is also worth noting that

¹⁷⁹Anselm, Ep. 372 Spero in deo quia dominus noster rex, sicut ipse mihi deo inspirante promittit, ad omne bonum nobis adiutor accedet; neque, si deus concordiam inceptam inter illum et me dignabitur perficere, aliquatenus a consilio nostro in iis quae ad nostrum ordinem pertinent, recedet. Quapropter de nostro negotio in praesentiarum nihil aliud faciam, donec apostolicam in proximo requirendam cognoscam sententiam.

¹⁸⁰Anselm, Ep. 179 Certum enim est et experimento saepe cognitum quia monasterium, in quo subditi facta praelati diiudicant, benigna dei dispositione non disponitur, sed per abrupta vitiorum dissolvitur et discordia scindente destruitur.

Anselm may feel more confident in this example as he is writing to his own monastic community. As such he has a direct responsibility for the well-being of the members and may also feel guilty that he is not personally on hand to take charge.

Once more Anselm begins his account with an acknowledgement of the tribulations suffered by those to whom he is writing. The correct response to such difficulties is posited in a similar manner to the previous letters discussed in this chapter – namely, to persevere and to live as holy a life as possible, in this instance through virtue. In such a fashion, he tells the monks, they may ‘advance towards greater things’ and ‘merit even greater gifts’. His statement that through such tribulation the monks may become ‘purified’ brings to mind the metaphor earlier in this chapter of vice as a form of sickness that ought to be healed. As opposed to the previous examples in this chapter, Anselm is not shy about stating specific activities that ought to be considered vices and presents the monks with a lengthy list:

Therefore let idle chatter among you come to an end, all slander be torn out by the root, muttering be suppressed, impatience be curbed, vain curiosity disappear, idleness be expelled, grumbling be banned, displeasure and unfitting anger on account of any mental offence be laid aside, negligence be eliminated and envy wiped out.¹⁸¹

In order to combat such a formidable list, Anselm makes a sweeping statement which touches upon almost every tenet of his normative philosophy. Intention must be harmonised with monastic rules, which are in turn to be held in love. Obedience, zeal, and diligence, must be enacted towards all virtues and these must be used to counter-act vices and impulses towards vices. Should these measures not be taken, the monastery might be harmed, for, even if one monk is to blame, the entire monastery is likely to be punished by God.

Let anything which is out of harmony with your intention be held in abomination and whatever harmonizes with monastic institutions be held in love. May obedience

¹⁸¹Anselm, Ep. 332 Cessent igitur in vobis vaniloquia, extirpetur omnis detractio, suffocetur murmuratio, exstinguatur impatientia, evanescat inutilium curiositas, expellatur otiositas, annihiletur mussitatio, evacuetur indignatio et pro qualibet offensione mentis indecens commotio, eliminetur negligentia, exterminetur invidentia.

and zeal and diligence towards all the virtues which fight against the above-mentioned vices, and all the others, burn brightly. Let each one examine diligently his private and public life, and let whoever finds a fault there hasten to offer worthy satisfaction lest God punish the whole community for his guilt. Divine judgement often does this so that a great number of people are thrown into confusion for the guilt of one alone.¹⁸²

And:

I must put an end to our exhortation because many of you have knowledge of the Scriptures, and you have our most beloved brother, Dom Prior Ernulf, who knows and can speak to you about these things and others.¹⁸³

It is significant that Anselm speaks of Scripture at the end of the letter for several reasons. The first is that it provides further credence to his statement that it is to be used as a guide for life. The second is that he indicates that not all of the monks would have a sufficient understanding to interpret it for themselves and would, instead, require the help of their Prior for guidance.

May almighty God deign to cleanse you from all evils, make you abound in all good things and rejoice after this life in his kingdom. May the blessing of God rest upon you and may he grant you the remission of all your sins.¹⁸⁴

In the final section of the letter, Anselm reiterates much of his ethical message in theological language, another critical component of his normative philosophy. The cleansing he speaks of is in clear reference to the purification mentioned earlier. Vices, in this context, are

¹⁸²Anselm, Ep. 332 Exsecrabile sit quidquid a vestro proposito discordat, amabile sit quidquid monachicis institutionibus concordat. Ferveat oboedientia et omnium virtutum, quae supradictis et aliis repugnant vitiis, studium et diligentia. Scrutetur unusquisque diligenter vitam suam secretam et publicam, et si invenit unde, festinet ad condignam satisfactionem, ne forte pro eius culpa flagellet deus totam congregationem. Saepe enim hoc faciunt divina iudicia, ut magna multitudo perturbetur unius culpa.

¹⁸³Anselm, Ep. 332 Finem faciam huius nostrae allocutionis, quia et plures ex vobis scripturas intelligitis, et habetis dilectissimum fratrem nostrum, domnum priorem ERNULFUM, qui haec et alia scit et potest dicere vobis.

¹⁸⁴Anselm, Ep. 332 Omnipotens deus dignetur vos ab omnibus malis emundare, et faciat bonis omnibus abundare, et post hanc vitam in suo regno exsultare. Sit super vos dei benedictio, et tribuatur vobis omnium vestrorum peccatorum remissio.

rephrased as evils. Importantly he goes on to describe the good that will come from such a virtuous existence, not in this life, but in the eternal life to come.

Although many of the examples that have already been used in this chapter deal with the recurring theme of virtue as desirable, yet unpleasant in a temporal setting, nowhere is this so clear as in those examples in which Anselm makes comparisons between virtue and beauty. In the two examples below, the first brings forth the idea of beauty as beheld by the eternal while the second makes a direct comparison with the sort of temporal beauty desired by many.

In the first example, written to Rainald, the Resigned Bishop of Hereford in 1104 or 1105, Anselm provides a clear indication of the value of virtue in relation to the divine. His use of expectation and the descriptions 'transitory' and 'paltry' ought to be read as temporal for the purposes of this discussion.

You would greatly tarnish the beauty of your virtue in the eyes of God if you expected anything paltry and transitory as a reward and consolation from him.¹⁸⁵

The remainder of this letter will be discussed later and in greater depth, but the reference to reward and consolation must be taken in this instance as diminishing virtue for a secondary reason, namely, such expectation contravenes Anselm's ethical theory as the ethical actor is no longer maintaining uprightness of will for its own sake but instead for the sake of a reward.

Some ten years before (c1094) Anselm had written to Abbess Matilda of Wilton and her Nuns, providing a direct comparison between the temporal and the eternal and how beauty is viewed. By so doing, Anselm is showing that a virtuous woman ought to consider herself both virtuous and beautiful in God's eyes and that such a status is more important than temporal beauty in the eyes of men.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵ Anselm, Ep. 343 Valde igitur decoloras pulchritudinem virtutis tuae coram deo, si quod vile et transitorium est, in praemium et consolationem exspectas ab eo.

¹⁸⁶ It was not uncommon for issues of beauty to be addressed in such a fashion to nuns in an attempt to convince them to follow their various Rules and to forego former styles of dress and the wearing of jewelry.

Accordingly, as the spouses of carnal men detest external foulness and strive to please by the beauty of their bodies and the appropriateness of their dress, in the same way the spiritual spouses of the King of kings,¹⁸⁷ the Son of God, should abhor inner impurity and continually strive to please him by the beauty of their minds and the ornaments of their virtues. Indeed, beauty of mind and nourishment of virtues is purity of heart, to which the sight of God¹⁸⁸ is particularly promised, and nobody is led to this purity without a watchful guard over his heart.¹⁸⁹

Once more the warnings of the ease with which virtue is lost is brought into the letter, in this instance seemingly to contrast with the earlier statement about the care of physical features. Although not directly mentioned in this letter, vanity and pride as vices would surely have been in Anselm's mind when writing and much of the content of the piece can be seen in that light.

Previous examples have shown in detail that the vicious, according to Anselm, will always clash with the virtuous, but in any system of virtue ethics there are times when virtues will necessarily come into conflict and require a degree of balancing within the individual. Different choices as a ethical actor will emphasise a specified virtue over another which may at first glance seem equally valuable. Although Anselm is by no means comprehensive (or indeed, philosophical) in his treatment of such conflicts, he does acknowledge that the difficulty can arise. This section will examine two letters written towards the end of his life in which he gives advice at least partially based upon prioritizing specific virtues.

The first example lies at the heart of the investiture conflict. Rainalm was invested as the Bishop of Hereford by the King but resigned the position on the basis of Papal decree. Anselm defends the position and explains how his decision was the more virtuous. Anselm does not deny that Rainalm may well have made an excellent Bishop and helped spread his

¹⁸⁷ 1 Tm 6:15.

¹⁸⁸ See Mt 5:8.

¹⁸⁹ Anselm, Ep. 185 Denique sicut sponsae carnalium virorum exteriorem foeditatem execrantes, per pulchritudinem carnis et vestium aptitudinem student placere: ita sponsae spirituales regis regum, filii dei, foeditatem interiorem detestantes, per mentis pulchritudinem et ornamenta virtutum ut illi placeant semper debent studere. Pulchritudo certe mentis et nutrimentum virtutum est cordis munditia, cui visio dei specialiter promittitur, ad quam munditiam nullus nisi per magnam cordis custodiam perducitur.

virtues throughout the diocese, but instead remarks that the manner of appointment is equally important. The salutation is unusual in its effusive nature. The majority of the language it employs, beyond the standard content of a salutation, is that of virtues and vices. The world is referenced once more as transitory, a common rhetorical device in Anselm's letters.¹⁹⁰

The first part of the letter is taken up in praise for Rainalm's action and in a warning against any expectation of repayment from God for such action. Instead the 'precious' virtue is seen as more valuable than any earthly possession. Anselm takes care to point out that the purpose of virtue, much as the purpose of uprightness of will, is for its own sake and not for the sake of temporal reward. Indeed, Anselm goes further. The idea that temporal reward would be desired in return for an act of virtue sullies the initial action immeasurably. Naturally Anselm does not accuse Rainalm of doing so, but warns him against such expectations.

Do not let your heart yearn that God may grant you as a reward for virtue what you scorned for the sake of virtue. The virtue which you preserved is far more precious than what you rejected for its sake. You would greatly tarnish the beauty of your virtue in the eyes of God if you expected anything paltry and transitory as a reward and consolation from him..¹⁹¹

The familiar imagery of rejoicing in tribulation is to be found once more and Anselm seeks to encourage Rainalm towards patience by waiting for the Lord to act. By so doing the Lord will favour his righteousness and justice and support his cause.

This I desire to be your consolation, in this I desire you to strengthen your hope. Then the Lord will make your righteousness like the dawn, and the justice of your

¹⁹⁰Anselm, Ep. 343 ANSELMUS, archiepiscopus Cantuariæ: RAINALMO, sapienter veritatem vanitati praeponenti, fortiter gloriam transitoriam pro honestate contemnenti, viriliter paupertatem superanti, salute et gratia dei semper protegi et confortari.

¹⁹¹Anselm, Ep. 343 Non intendat cor tuum, ut hoc tibi deus praemium virtutis retribuatur, quod pro virtute contempsisti. Pretiosior est valde virtus quam servasti, quam quod pro illa respuisti. Valde igitur decoloras pulchritudinem virtutis tuae coram deo, si quod vile et transitorium est, in praemium et consolationem expectas ab eo.

cause like the noonday sun.¹⁹² Since I do not know what God is going to do with me I dare not promise anything from myself for your consolation but I can show the goodwill which God has given me and which you have deserved. Certainly, if I have the opportunity at any time, by the grace of God, I desire to be useful to you in body and soul. May almighty God, my dearest brother, make you rejoice by his continuing protection and consolation.¹⁹³

Anselm exhorts Rainald to rejoice in his adversity and it is clear that the protection here referred to is the protection of the soul rather than any form of protection from temporal harm. This is contrasted with the hope that he may 'rejoice', a characteristic flourish that highlights the self-interest of virtue.

In 1106/07 Anselm wrote to Lambert, Abbot of St. Bertin, about his elevation to the Archbishopric of Rheims. This was done without the permission or consent of the Abbot of Cluny, to whom Lambert owed allegiance and obedience.¹⁹⁴

Advice is a necessary part of virtue as men cannot presume they are always ethically correct. Lambert is not only displaying humility through the admittance of the need for counsel, but is also being virtuous by having done so.

First of all, I pray to God that he may allow nothing to be done in your case unless it pleases him and is advantageous for you. Since you ask for my advice, as far as I can understand it appears to me more beneficial that your will, as far as it lies with you, should offer no consent. Do not say or do anything which could lead to your being dragged for any reason to the burden to which you are being called. No necessity forces you except unconditional obedience alone. You should not acknowledge any

¹⁹² Ps 36:6.

¹⁹³Anselm, Ep. 343 Hanc desidero esse consolationem tuam, in hoc desidero ut confirmes spem tuam. Tunc "educet" dominus "quasi lumen iustitiam tuam, et iudicium tuum tamquam meridiem". Quia nescio quid deus de me dispositurus sit, nihil ex me in consolationem tuam audeo promittere, sed voluntatem meam, quam mihi deus dedit et tu meruisti, possum ostendere. Certe, si deo dante aliquando opportunitatem habuero, et secundum corpus et secundum animam tibi prodesse desidero. Omnipotens deus continua sua te protectione et consolatione gaudere faciat, frater mi carissime.

¹⁹⁴Anselm, Ep. 421 Quia ecclesia Remensis desiderat et petit reverentiam vestram, sicut scripsistis mihi, sibi ad regimen archiepiscopatus: postulat vestra prudentia a mea parvitate consilium quid sibi faciendum sit in tam magna re, tam onerosa tam que periculosa.

command under obedience to accept this office except from the lord Abbot of Cluny, to whom you subjected yourself.¹⁹⁵

In a subsequent chapter on obedience, Anselm's views on the subject will be examined in greater detail, but for the time being, it is worth noting that obedience is here viewed as the primary and overwhelming virtue in this instance of political ambiguity. To act in a fashion that might in any way detract from the obedience owed to one to whom Lambert had pledged an oath of obedience is regarded as not only disobeying that individual (in this case the Abbot of Cluny) but, as the oath would have been made before God, of lying to and disobeying God as well.

But as to what you say, that you would rather incur the guilt of disobedience than take on such a burdensome labor and laborious burden, that is not my advice. For disobedience which is not followed by repentance is more dangerous than obedience which undertakes, in the hope of God's mercy, even what seems impossible.¹⁹⁶ When obedience alone leads a man into danger, the virtue and the merit of obedience either protect him from sin or, if by chance he does sin, it is less serious if always accompanied by repentance. Indeed, whoever lives in disobedience cannot perform any good deed without blemish.¹⁹⁷

It is clear that Anselm feels that both potential courses of action are in some way flawed, but that the more virtuous option is to be obedient and attempt what he considers to be difficult to the point of impossibility.

¹⁹⁵Anselm, Ep. 421 In primis oro deum, ut ipse nihil permittat de vobis fieri, nisi quod illi placet et vobis expedit. Consilium autem meum quod petitis, in quantum intelligere possum, hoc mihi videtur salubrius, ut voluntas vestra, quantum in vobis est, nullum praebeat assensum; nihil dicatis, nihil faciatis quod ad hoc possit valere, ut ad onus ad quod vocamini aliqua occasione pertrahamini. Nulla vos cogat necessitas, praeter solam et puram oboedientiam. Oboedientiam vero nullam ad hoc suscipiatis, nisi a domno abbate Cluniacensi, cui vos subdidistis.

¹⁹⁶ RB 68:1,5.

¹⁹⁷Anselm, Ep. 421 Quod autem dicitis vos malle inoboedientiae culpam incurrere, quam tam onerosum opus et operosum onus suspicere: non est meum consilium. Periculosior namque est inoboedientia, quam non sequitur paenitentia, quam sit oboedientia, quae in spe misericordiae dei aggreditur etiam ea quae videntur impossibilia. Virtus enim et meritum oboedientiae, cum sola impellit hominem in periculum: aut defendit hominem a peccato; aut, si forte peccat, valde veniale est, si semper comitatur paenitentia. Qui autem vivit in inoboedientia, nullum bonum opus facit sine macula.

Although Anselm never provides us with a full philosophical treatise on virtue ethics, several of his letters show that he was accustomed to thinking about virtues and vices on a level that exceeds passing familiarity. The next two examples, the first discussing pride and the second discussing peace, provide firm evidence that he would have been comfortable teaching others about categories of virtue and vice and the way in which they would interact in the life of the individual. The first letter in particular presents all of the trappings of a philosophical system and this argument is further strengthened by a remarkably similar treatment of the subject matter appearing in Anselm's memorials.

Written to Conus in the summer of 1103, the letter outlines three types of pride: pride in judgement, pride in will, and pride in deed. It is philosophically interesting that they seem to closely mirror the stages of ethical decision making that Anselm stipulates when he parses ethical action in *De veritate* and stylistically significant that on this occasion he takes pains to inform Conus that examples of each of these types of pride can be found in Holy Scripture. This is used in conjunction with a number of scriptural references that serve to illustrate the necessity of a philosophical examination of pride, if only for the edification of the ethical actor. Each type of pride is given its own scriptural basis:

I said that there were three: one is in judgement, that it, when someone thinks of himself more highly than he ought. Against this it is said: Do not be high-minded but fear.¹⁹⁸ And whoever denies that such feelings were in him says: Lord, my heart is not exalted¹⁹⁹ and so on. The second is in the will, when someone wishes to be treated differently and more highly than he ought. Against this it is said: How can you believe – you who seek honor from one another?²⁰⁰ And You know I have not desired the [judgement] day of man.²⁰¹ The third is in deed. Against this the Lord

¹⁹⁸ Rm 11:20.

¹⁹⁹ Ps 130:1.

²⁰⁰ Jn 5:44.

²⁰¹ Jer 17:16.

says: When you are invited to a wedding, do not sit down in the chief place.²⁰² It occurs when a man treats himself more highly than he ought.²⁰³

Anselm makes it clear in other parts of the letter that these are by no means the only sources of scriptural backing that might be used as evidence for types of pride. Although pride can be viewed as distinct types, that does not mean that an individual will only embody a single type of pride at a time and it is easily possible for each combination to exist, resulting in seven distinct combinations of prideful behaviour. When he assesses the severity of each type of pride, Anselm does so in a context reminiscent of his ethics of intent. If a man is prideful in deed alone, but not by will or judgement, then he is only truly in error by dint of his ignorance. While this should still be corrected, it has the merit of being less bad than an intended harm, such as will. Anselm credits pride by judgement to be the most concerning as it is impossible to correct since the individual believes their action to be ethically good.

Of these three, when each is considered separately, the lightest is the one which is in deed alone because it is done only through ignorance; and yet it is a fault which should be corrected. Of the other two kinds, that which is in the will alone is the more to be condemned because it sins consciously. The one which is in judgement is the only one which cannot be cured because it does not disclose itself and appears just to itself. If therefore these three kinds of pride are considered separately, three single kinds of pride can be spoken of. If they are considered in pairs, they form three pairs. If all three kinds are joined together at once they form one trio. And so there are seven kinds in all: three single kinds, three pairs and one trio.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Lk 14:8.

²⁰³ Anselm, Ep. 285 Tres quidem illos esse dixi: unum in aestimatione, id est quando aliquis altius existimat de se quam debeat; contra quem dicitur: "Noli aulum sapere, sed time". Et quem negat in se fuisse qui dicit: "Domine, non est exaltatum cor meum" et quae sequuntur. Alius est in voluntate, quando aliquis altius se vult tractari aliquo modo quam debeat; contra quem dicitur: "Quomodo potestis credere, qui gloriam quaeritis ab invicem?" Et: "Diem hominis non desideravi, tu scis". Alius est in opere; contra quem dominus dicit: "Cum invitatus fueris ad nuptias, non discumbas in primo loco". Iste est, quando homo se ipsum tractat altius quam debeat.

²⁰⁴ Anselm, Ep. 285 De his tribus, quando singula quaeque sola est, illa est levior, quae in solo opere est, quia non fit nisi per ignorantiam; et tamen vitium est, quia corrigendum est. De aliis duabus illa, quae est in sola voluntate, damnablest, quia scienter peccat. Illa vero quae est in aestimatione, sola insanabilior est, quia non se ostendit et iusta sibi videtur. Si ergo istae tres superbiae singulae considerentur, tres simplices possunt dici superbiae. Si vero binae et binae intelligantur, tres duplices

To fight against these forms of pride, Anselm presents Conus with three forms of humility which constitute the opposing virtue.

Against these kinds of pride, types of humility also exist: that is to say, a man may think humbly of himself; he may exercise his will humbly concerning himself in his treatment of and behaviour towards others, and he may treat himself humbly. On account of each kind of pride a man is called proud; but on account of each type of humility, or of two of them, a man is not called humble, but only if all the types are there at the same time. In the same way a man is called sick if one limb is ailing, but is not called healthy unless all his limbs are healthy.²⁰⁵

Anselm again uses a reference to illness in order to illustrate his point. In doing so, he shows that it is easier to be considered vicious than virtuous. Indeed, a single vice constitutes sufficient ill ethical health to taint the rest of the individual.

Thus I have reminded your charity these things briefly. If your prudence will reconsider them more frequently you will more fully understand what has been said here. Farewell, and pray for me that as God has granted me to understand pride and humility he may also grant me to avoid the one and acquire the other. Greet our lord and friend, the reverend Bishop of Arras on our behalf.²⁰⁶

In the last portion of the letter, Anselm acknowledges that such virtues and vices require constant consideration in order to gain a firm understanding and acquire and avoid them respectively.

inveniuntur. Si vero tres simul coniungantur, erit una triplex. Et sic erunt septem: tres simplices, tres duplices, una triplex.

²⁰⁵Anselm, Ep. 285 Contra istas superbias sunt membra humilitatis, id est, ut humiliter quis sentiat de se, et quantum ad tractatum et conversationem aliorum, humiliter velit de se, et ipse humiliter tractet se. Pro singulis modis superbiae dicitur homo superbus; sed pro singulis membris humilitatis, vel pro duobus, nisi omnia membra simul sint, non dicitur homo humilis; sicut uno membro languente dicitur homo aeger, sanus autem non dicitur, nisi sanis omnibus membris.

²⁰⁶Anselm, Ep. 285 Haec breviter commemoravi caritati vestrae. Quae si prudentia vestra saepius retractaverit, plenius ea intelliget, quam hic dicta sint. Valet et orate pro me, ut, sicut deus dedit mihi superbiam et humilitatem intelligere, sic mihi det illam cavere et istam acquirere. Salutate dominum et amicum nostrum, reverendum episcopum Atrebatensem, ex parte nostra.

A less philosophical example, provides the other half of Anselm's ethical arsenal, the theological. Written to Prior John and the Monks of Bath sometime between 1106 and 1109, it is significant that Anselm begins with Biblical language from the Psalms before in the next sentence taking up an extended discourse about a specific virtue:

Indeed I can briefly express all the things you should avoid and all the things you should seek by saying: Turn from evil and do good,²⁰⁷ but I consider it more appropriate to admonish your holiness about one particular virtue.²⁰⁸

This passage encapsulates the main theme of this chapter, namely, that while ethically good action can be viewed in incredibly simple terms, as was to be found in the previous chapter on the ethics of intent, to effectively integrate good ethical action into day to day life requires a complex language of multiple virtues and vices.

Along with obedience, peace is a commonly mentioned virtue in Anselm's letter collection. It provides, as Anselm explains, a similar trait to heaven, the abode of God and its lack characterizes all that is detrimental in the temporal world. Peace is achieved through the alignment of one's will with others and with God.

Therefore I exhort you to strive whole-heartedly to keep peace among yourselves for it is said of God: His abode has been made in peace...²⁰⁹ This you can only follow and preserve if each one of you does not try to make another carry out his will but always, as long as it is according to the righteousness and will of God, to promote the will of another. Strife among secular men is about the will of each individual, as each one says, 'Not as you will, but as I will'; true strife among monks is 'Let it not be done according to my will but according to yours'.²¹⁰ No one should expect that

²⁰⁷ Ps 36:27.

²⁰⁸ Anselm, Ep. 450 Possum quidem breviter comprehendere quaecumque vitanda sunt et quae appetenda, dicendo: "declina a malo et fac bonum"; sed convenientius existimo, ut de aliqua virtute nominatim religionem vestram admoneam.

²⁰⁹ Cf Ps 75:2.

²¹⁰ Cf Lk 22:42.

when he does the will of another he will repay him by acting in the same way, but he should strive never to abandon his good resolution whatever the other may do.²¹¹

Anselm completes his initial discussion of peace with an exhortation to love, neatly placing peace within the context of his teleological view.

Having done so, Anselm speaks of the monastic rule to which the brothers must adhere in a manner reminiscent of many of the examples previously discussed in this chapter that deal with virtue.

Moreover, concerning your rule, you should be so careful that you do not violate it in the slightest way anywhere or at any time, in secret or in the sight of others. For it is written: He who despises little things fails little by little.²¹² If therefore you want to make progress before God, never wish to despise even the smallest commands. Just as he who despises little things fails little by little, so he who does not despise little things advances, I do not say little by little, but successfully. My brothers, act so that you can say with the Prophet: My soul is always in my hands.²¹³ For in all your deeds you should consider that your soul is always in your hands because whatever anyone does his soul will receive accordingly. May almighty God protect you from all evil²¹⁴ and having absolved you from all your sins make you persevere in your good works.²¹⁵

²¹¹Anselm, Ep. 450 Hortor ergo, ut pacem servare inter vos toto corde studeatis, quia dicitur de deo: "factus est in pace locus eius". Ita ergo domus et templum dei vere eritis, si pacem inter vos constanter habueritis. Quam hoc modo assequi et servare poteritis, si unusquisque non intendat ut alius suam faciat voluntatem, sed ut ipse semper, servata rectitudine et voluntate dei, alterius faveat voluntati. Inter saeculares homines est contentio de singulorum propria voluntate, ut unusquisque dicat: 'non sicut tu vis, sed sicut ego volo'; contentio vero monachorum est: 'non secundum voluntatem meam fiat, sed secundum tuam'. Nec debet unusquisque exspectare ut, cum facit alterius voluntatem, ille sibi similiter faciendo retribuatur; sed in hoc debet studere ut, quidquid alius faciat, ipse numquam a bono proposito suo deficiat.

²¹² Si 19:1.

²¹³ Ps 118:109.

²¹⁴ Ps 121:7.

²¹⁵Anselm, Ep. 450 De ordine quoque vestro ita solliciti esse debetis, ut nec in modico illum alicubi vel aliquando, in secreto vel in conspectu aliorum violetis. Scriptum est enim: "Qui modica despicit, paulatim decedit". Si ergo coram deo vultis proficere, numquam minima mandata velitis despiciere. Sicut autem qui modica despicit, paulatim decedit: sic qui modica non despicit, non dico paulatim, sed

Anselm finishes the letter with a reiteration of how easy it is to lose progress towards God once it has been attained and warns of the harms that can occur when individuals are not strict with themselves and with their fellows. He once more makes certain that an inducement is included to show that virtue, while its own reward, is a critical facet of progress towards the love of God and the rewards of the eternal kingdom.

The final example of this chapter, written to the monks of the monastery of Saint Werburgh at Chester (c1102), provides the greatest insight into how Anselm's normative philosophy could be used to navigate a pragmatic challenge. It provides the most important example of Anselm speaking to a monastic audience about how to live a virtuous life that survives and is therefore critical to our understanding of the role that virtue ethics would have played alongside ethics of intent and Anselm's teleological view of human life. It also embodies the vast majority of the themes that have been dealt with elsewhere in this chapter and is therefore a useful tool in assessing their interaction.

Anselm begins the letter as he has many of the aforementioned examples. He praises God for the grace he has shown and credits him with the advance towards virtue that may be seen in the community. The virtuous life is presented as a goal that man must aspire to progress towards and the ease with which man might fall away from what he has acquired is alluded to.

God's assistance and grace is presented as most likely when the monks are protecting their virtue from any chance of deterioration. This is reminiscent of Anselm's writings in *De concordia*, showing once more that while ethical goodness is insufficient in and of itself for navigating the path towards heaven, it was the surest way of maintaining the gift of God's grace. Although God is necessary to provide the impetus to greater virtue, man can lose virtue through negligence alone and thus the responsibility for intention and action lie solely upon his shoulders.

efficaciter proficit. Fratres, facite ut possitis dicere cum propheta: "Anima mea in manibus meis semper". In omnibus enim operibus vestris debetis considerare, quasi anima sit in manibus vestris semper; quia quidquid unusquisque faciet, hoc anima eius recipiet. Omnipotens deus vos ab omni malo custodiat, et absolutos ab omnibus peccatis in bonis operibus vos perseverare faciat.

This he will surely do as long as you are not negligent in preserving the good things you have already achieved. If it is up to God always to guide us by his grace, so it is up to us to protect zealously what we receive by his help. For although we can neither possess nor preserve anything as all except through him, yet to lose anything or fall in any way is due to our negligence alone.²¹⁶

Anselm warns that a favourite ploy of the devil is to convince men that small affairs do not matter or concern them. By so doing they neglect such affairs and begin to fall away from virtue 'little by little'. It is in this fashion that the devil manages to harm many monastic institutions which fall to ruin from such influences. Indeed, the most inviolable institutions are those which take care to follow the minutiae of their Rule:

For it is absolutely certain – as we have learned by experience²¹⁷ in many churches – that in a monastery where the smallest matters are strictly observed, the severity of monastic rule remains inviolable, there is peace among the brothers and denunciations in chapter come to an end. But where the smallest faults are neglected the whole rule breaks down little by little and is destroyed. If, therefore, you want to advance from strength to strength²¹⁸ and from progress to progress, always fear to offend God in the slightest detail.²¹⁹

The final sentence in the paragraph offers hope against such cunning tricks. By always fearing to offend God, man may be vigilant in his actions and ensure that he loses no virtue but, rather, continues to progress.

In the next portion of the letter, Anselm provides a detailed account of why even small actions are critical to the ethical well-being and virtue of the individual. The idea is similar

²¹⁶ Anselm, Ep. 231 Quod pro certo ipse faciet, si non negligentes fueritis bona, ad quae iam pervenistis, servare. Cum enim dei sit sua gratia semper nos praevenire, nostrum est quod accipimus eius auxilio studiose custodire. Nam quamvis nec habere nec servare possimus aliquid nisi per illum, perdere tamen et deficere non est nisi ex nostra negligentia.

²¹⁷ RB 59:6.

²¹⁸ Ps 84:8.

²¹⁹ Anselm, Ep. 231 Certissimum namque est - quod in multis ecclesiis experimento didicimus - quia in monasterio, ubi minima districte custodiuntur, ibi rigor ordinis monachorum inviolabilis permanet, ibi pax inter fratres et in capitulo proclamationes conquiescunt. Ubi vero minimi excessus negliguntur, ibi totus ordo paulatim dissipatur et destruitur. Si ergo de virtute in virtutem et de profectu ad profectum vultis ascendere, semper timete in singulis minimis deum offendere.

to Anselm's conception of the ethics of intent, for he directly challenges the notion that the important aspect of any action is its outcome. Instead, he asks the monks to consider the virtue or vice that the action embodies for it is in this context that the true value of the action lies.

You should not consider how slight was the action you carried out against an order but rather how bad was the disobedience you committed for this little thing. Obedience alone could have kept man in paradise from where he was expelled through disobedience, and nobody will reach the heavenly kingdom except through obedience. Consider that if man was thrown out into the extreme misery we suffer in this world for one single act of disobedience, how much ought we to abhor it and strive for the good of obedience.²²⁰

Anselm's use of obedience as an example of a virtue within this context is far from an accident. Obedience was, to Anselm, one of the most important virtues and a cornerstone of every monastic community. Not only were monks required to profess obedience to their monastic superiors, they were also required to obey the monastic Rule and Holy Scripture. This was the path to the virtuous life in a monastic context and Anselm's final sentence in the section reflects his teleological views and the desired end of the virtuous life within the same framework.

Banish idleness as something hostile to your souls, and each one should reflect that we will have to account to God for every single moment of our lives. Therefore he to whom God grants any grace for any purpose should use it whenever he has the chance. On the day of judgement whoever has not made use of his power to do good will be judged as if he did not have it and what he appeared to have will be taken away from him²²¹ for he will have forfeited the reward he could have earned. From then on he will have no further opportunity in his sufferings to do any good. It will

²²⁰Anselm, Ep. 231 Non debetis considerare quam parva sit res quam contra prohibitionem facitis, sed quantum malum sit inoboedientia quam pro parva re incurritis. Sola enim oboedientia potuit hominem in paradiso retinere, unde per inoboedientiam eiectus est, neque ad regnum caelorum aliquis nisi per oboedientiam perducitur. Pensate quia, si homo per unam solam inoboedientiam in tantam miseriam quam patimur in hoc mundo proiectus est: quantum debeamus eam horrere et oboedientiae bono studere.

²²¹ Mt 25:29.

be as if what is taken away from him will be given to someone else²²² because the reward of the one who now does good according to this gift he has received will be increased since this man did not fail to do good despite the example of the one who was living negligently by his side. I give thanks to you because you pray for me, and I pray that you will not desist from this work of charity.²²³

The final paragraph in this letter shows not only the endpoint of Anselm's ethical philosophy, but the critical facet of his political beliefs. It is not simply enough for man to avoid vice or to avoid sin, man must take advantage of the opportunities provided by God in order to enact positive change and make good ethical decisions. If an individual wastes these chances for virtue then it is not their virtue or vice that will be tallied, but rather it is the fact that they were granted opportunities which they refused to take.

The consideration of virtues and vices was a practical manner in which individuals were able to measure their own ethical progress and allowed them to be judged in both a monastic and secular setting. While not sufficient alone for navigating the path between the temporal and the eternal, God's given grace was also required, the best manner in which man was able to maintain the gift of grace was through ethical living. This manner of viewing ethical decisions by no means supplanted or compromised the virtue ethics which Anselm espoused. Rather it provided a complimentary measure that was better suited to the temporal life. In addition it provided guidance on specific areas that ethics of intent was either unclear on or difficult to distinguish. Much as in the case of ethics of intent, Anselm speaks of virtue ethics in a manner that makes clear that it was a common way of viewing ethical matters in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. In the coming chapters on

²²² Mt 25:28.

²²³ Anselm, Ep. 231 Otiositatem quoque sicut rem inimicam animarum vestrarum a vobis excludite, et unusquisque consideret quia de singulis momentis vitae nostrae reddituri sumus deo rationem. Cuicumque ergo deus dat aliquam gratiam ad quamlibet utilitatem, ea utatur, in quantum habuerit opportunitatem. Qui enim non utitur potestate benefaciendi quam habet, in die iudicii quasi non habens iudicabitur, et ab illo auferetur hoc ipsum quod habere videtur, quia et praemio quod mereri potuit carebit, et deinceps nullam alicuius boni operis potestatem in poenis habebit. Quasi autem alii dabitur quod ab illo auferetur, quando illi qui bene operatur secundum donum quod accepit, praemium augebitur, quia iuxta illum qui negligenter vixit, eius exemplo a bono opere non defecit. Gratias ago vobis quia pro me oratis, et oro ut ab hac caritate non desistatis.

obedience and political considerations, the role of virtue ethics in the organisation of communities will become increasingly clear.

Obedience

It is difficult to overstate the importance of obedience in the grand scheme of Anselm's thought. Not only was it an important element in terms of its role as a virtue, it provided a critical aspect in terms of the will of the individual. This chapter will seek to analyse obedience in several different settings, focusing on the monastic and the personal. To Anselm, obedience was the key virtue to be embodied in the monastic setting. Not only did the prioritisation of such a virtue ensure a degree of harmony and peace (which in and of itself allowed other virtues to flourish), but obedience represented far more. By obeying their spiritual superiors in the monastery and the Rules to which they had taken oaths, monks were more closely adhering to God's will and behaving in the best ethical fashion for both their temporal and eternal futures.

Within his letter collection Anselm deals with obedience most often in the context of monastic life. Four main areas will be considered in what follows. First the frequency of Anselm's encouragement of obedience towards superiors within the monastery will be discussed. Next the occasions on which Anselm encourages individuals to be obedient towards their monastic vows and rules will be examined. Third, the rare occasions on which Anselm makes allowances for disobedience will be integrated with his ethical philosophy as discussed in previous chapters. Lastly this chapter will examine the manner in which an individual who was disobedient was expected to repent and be punished. By countering the image of the obedient monk with the turmoil of the disobedient, Anselm's views on mercy and justice can be examined from a pragmatic standpoint.

The discussion of personal freedom that represents the most consistent theme within this chapter will necessarily have to take place in two parts. The first is best characterized as a description of what Anselm believes freedom of the individual actually entails. The second involves more practical elements of freedom and obedience within the monastic context and is best exemplified by discussions of whether an individual is at liberty to retire from a position of authority, or indeed, must take a new one on. Equally, the discussion at the end of the chapter of punishment and repentance shows this theme to be more complex than it at first seems. The personal freedom of one monk could often disrupt the spiritual progress of others within the community. As such, whenever punishment or repentance are discussed,

the manner in which others in the monastery must treat a repentant fellow are quick to follow.

It is clear from Anselm's ethical philosophy that liberty of the individual is best defined as the ability to accord the individual will with God's will and that sentiment necessarily shapes all discussions that can be had about Anselm and individual freedom. He is rarely, if ever, referring to a conception of physical freedom, indeed, it can be seen in the next example that he scorns the concept of such an idea possessing innate value. The examples that will be used display a striking range from a modern perspective. While they are philosophically consistent, it is easy to use them to portray Anselm as harsh or insensitive. Rather, they show his rigid determination to make the seamless transition from the temporal to the eternal and to guide others along the same teleological path. It is a strong argument in favour of the coherence of Anselm's normative philosophy that this material remains broadly consistent with his philosophical writings.

A particularly pragmatic example of Anselm's views on obedience can be found in his letter to the Monk Henry, written before 1074. Anselm begins his discussion of the matter at hand by assuring Henry that he speaks from a position of love for Henry and for his soul. This is as much a basis for Anselm's forthcoming ethical arguments as it is an attempt to re-assure Henry that Anselm has his best interests at heart. He goes on to provide an early development of the recurring theme of advice as a form of obedience:

Indeed I find no advice more useful or more universal than that which Wisdom advises us: that we do everything with consideration lest our deed be followed by repentance. Just as this counsel is very wisely given so it is very truly valid; to whatever degree somebody disregards this, to the same degree he chooses not to rejoice over his deeds but to rue them. Therefore, if anyone advises you to make use of this counsel his advice should be listened to no less heedlessly than the advice of him who is to be obeyed by all persons and in all things.²²⁴

²²⁴ Anselm, Ep. 17 *Consilium autem nullum utilius vel universalius invenio quam illud, quo nobis per sapientiam consulitur: ut, ne paenitentia nostros actus subsequatur, omnia faciamus cum consilio. Quod quoniam sicut est sapientissime datum, ita est verissime ratum: in quantum illud quisque negligit, in tantum de actibus suis non laetari sed paenitere eligit. Quisquis igitur tibi consulit ut hoc*

Anselm's discussion of counsel as a form of obedience is a recurring theme in many of Anselm's letters. Knowledge itself and the manner in which decisions are made are full of uncertainty. Advice is a way of minimising this uncertainty and seeking to establish a form of truth. Refusal to accept counsel can be seen as being disobedient to the individuals who give the advice. In certain cases, particularly when a large group of friends or a monastic superior is the one advising, this disobedience can be seen as leading towards sinful behaviours. Anselm then proceeds to unfold the narrative as he understands it:

You intend, I have heard, to go from England to Italy to defend your sister, because you have heard that some rich man has deceitfully subjected her to undeserved servitude. I beseech you, dearest friend, through our mutual friendship – if any there be in you – through my happiness for you – if you wish there to be any in me – not to do this. For, my beloved, what concern is it of monks and those who claim they want to flee the world?²²⁵

To Anselm, all men are servants in this life and the next, as all men must be obedient to those above them. In this instance, therefore, to whom the sister is referred as being a servant to is of little concern as it reflects only pride in those who might think it matters. Anselm extends this point to show that all good men ought to be servants to the divine:

To whom are the servants and under what name [do they serve] in the world? In short, is not every man born to trouble and birds to fly? Under the name superior or under the name servant, does not everyone, or nearly everyone, serve? Is it not so that someone who is called a servant in the Lord is a free man of the Lord and someone who is called a free man in the Lord is a servant of Christ? If, therefore, all work and serve this way, and a servant is the Lord's free man and a free man is Christ's servant, what does it matter, except to pride, whether one is called a servant of a free man in the sight of the world or before God? The Apostle says: if you are

utaris consilio, non negligentius consilium eius est audiendum, quam illud ipsum, cui ab omnibus et in omnibus est oboediendum.

²²⁵Anselm, Ep. 17 Vis enim, ut mihi dictum est, ire de Anglia in Italiam sororem tuam defendere, quam audis quemdam divitem indebitae servituti calumniose subicere. Quod, carissime, obsecro per - si qua in te est - mutuam nostram amicitiam; per - si quam mihi vis esse - de te laetitiam: ne facias. Quid enim, dilectissime, monachorum interest et eorum qui se profitentur velle fugere mundum, qui quibus vel quo nomine serviant in mundo?

called a servant, let it be of no concern to you. And why are we, who are not permitted or need not be concerned about ourselves, so concerned about others?²²⁶

This passage is a primary example of Anselm arguing that eternal teleological aims ought to be more important than earthly concerns when making ethical decisions. Being incarcerated on earth cannot compare to losing the opportunity for eternal bliss in heaven and, as such, is a matter of lesser importance. This also provides further evidence against the deontological idea of the primacy of justice, as, under a strict reading, with justice as a critical facet of leading an ethical life, assisting the sister would be critical in restoring justice.

The discussion of the matter in hand begins with Anselm admitting that what the monk wishes to do may be, in some senses, a good ethical action. His argument against it, therefore, is that the cost in ethical terms is too high. In essence he returns to his adage that one never ought to do evil in order for good to emerge.²²⁷ This evil in this instance involves several elements including the breaking of a vow, the exposure to dangers, and potential damage to not only his physical being, but his spiritual as well. Moreover, were he to undertake such a trip, he would be doing so against the advice of those around him, a particular problem as he has sworn to obey his superiors.

Even if it is good to want to free a person bound to difficult circumstances, yet what you intend is not good enough to be worth looking back at after having held on to Christ's plough for so long; worth having a monk break his vow by such an interruption; worth exposing him, by so important and extraordinary a desire, to so many difficult dangers and dangerous difficulties of body and soul; worth resisting, with such singular and inflexible thinking, the advice of all his friends – those younger, those of the same age, those older and his superiors – and I, aware [of the problem], shout rebuke out of charity to my friend who is aware [of what I mean].

²²⁶Anselm, Ep. 17 Denique nonne omnis "homo ad laborem nascitur, et avis ad volatum"? Nonne omnis vel paene omnis homo aut sub nomine praestandi aut sub nomine famulandi servit? Nonne "servus vocatus in domino libertus est domini", et "liber vocatus" in domino "servus est Christi"? Si ergo sic omnes laborant et serviunt, et sic est servus libertus domini et liber servus Christi: quid refert, excepta superbia, quantum vel ad mundum vel ad deum quis vocetur servus vel liber? Apostolus dicit: si "servus vocatus es, non sit tibi curae"; et nos quod pro nobis curare vel prohibemur vel non indigemus, pro aliis tantopere curabimus?

²²⁷Anselm, Ep. 311.

Therefore, because there are so many and such certain difficulties or even evils involved in it, if this single good, so inopportune, so uncertain and so harmful a good be compared [with others], then who, understanding the good, would not say that it is not only not good but positively evil?²²⁸

The fact that Anselm highlights the uncertainty of the outcome of specific plans is entirely consistent with his writings on the ethic of intent. Equally, the balance of goods, can be compared to the virtues that at times he was often forced to balance. In the next portion of the letter, Anselm admits that such a balance can be difficult to determine, especially for an emotionally invested ethical actor:

Therefore, dearest friend, trust more in your friends' advice than in your own deliberation, unless you consider yourself wiser than all of them. But because your mind, under the strain of great emotion, weighs any little good in it, it mistakenly does not for this reason weigh with equal measure the things which counterbalance it. For as often as we propound the many things it would be better to choose, having once set aside all our own cravings, we should consider the weight of all these matters. For if we join the weight of love to the weight of the cause loved, we are without doubt deceived by the things we have to decide about. Therefore, if your prudence does not wish to make a mistake in deliberating about your choice, you should not merely attach your affection to the matter you long for but you should fairly judge the arguments we put forward in this matter alone. And if you persist in your own will – which with God's help may not happen – just as you will act against

²²⁸Anselm, Ep. 17 Etsi enim bonum sit velle liberare hominem violentae conditioni addictum: hoc utique quod intendis non tam bonum est, ut dignum sit pro quo tenens aratrum Christi tam longe retro respiciat; pro quo monachus propositum suum tanta intercapedine interrumpat; pro quo se tot corporis et animae laboriosis periculis et periculosus laboribus tanta et tam singulari voluntate committat; pro quo - ut secundum caritatem conscius conscium amicum increpem - tam solitaria, tam rigida sententia omnium amicorum - minorum, parium, maiorum et praelatorum - consilio resistat. Cum igitur haec tot et tanta certa incommoda vel potius mala sint, si illud unum tam inopportunist, tam incertum, tam noxium bonum conferatur: quis intelligens illud bonum, ac non potius non bonum vel magis malum dixerit?

the opinion of all your friends, so you will not have any of their support in this matter harmful to you.²²⁹

It is interesting that Anselm first insults the monk, by questioning his humility in terms of his perception of his own wisdom before excusing him on account of the emotional strain to which he is no doubt subject. In a further display of the uncertainty of ethical action as it is perceivable to the individual, Anselm makes it clear that love and other emotions can hinder the reasoned approach that man must take to making ethical decisions. This is, then, the true value of obedience. Others who are able to view such circumstances dispassionately and with a greater degree of objectivity are able to provide counsel and instruction that is better for the ethical well-being of the individual than the individual can furnish for themselves.

This discussion of comparative ethics shows a rich and complex philosophical system which Anselm is clearly pleased to use as a practical application. For Anselm, there is good in releasing the sister, but on balance, the temporal good that is produced, fails to compare to the eternal harm that is caused. Emotions are capable of clouding judgement and preventing reason from performing its intended role. Counsel, therefore, becomes increasingly important to obedience of the individual.

Therefore, obey his and our admonitions so that by obeying a kind father being in agreement with a friendly brother – if you love them – you may give joy to both father and brother... Farewell, and if I can do anything for you, request it of me as quickly as you can whether you bend your will to one who loves you in the flesh – I

²²⁹Anselm, Ep. 17 Crede igitur, carissime, plus consiliis amicorum, si te solum sapientiore omnibus illis non aestimas, quam tuae deliberationi. Quia enim mens tua magnum affectum suum cum aliquantulo bono illo ponderat, idcirco ea quae sola compensanda sunt, se ipsam fallens aequa libra non trutinat. Quotiens namque de pluribus quod magis oportet eligere proponimus, omni nostro appetitu seposito rerum ipsarum pondera sola conferre debemus. Nam si pondus amoris ponderi rei amatae coniungimus, absque dubio in rerum discernendarum iudicio decipimur. Quapropter si se ipsam prudentia tua non vult fallere, non debet affectum suum cum re quam appetit in electionis suae deliberationem coniungere, sed rem ipsam solam iis quae opponimus iudicando opponere. Quod si in propria voluntate perstiteris - quod deo protegente non erit -: sicut eris contra omnium amicorum tuorum sensum, ita nullius eorum in re tibi noxia habebis assensum.

...speak of your will – or whether you shun the opinion of those who love you in the spirit.²³⁰

The primacy, here, is placed on the spiritual family that would have comprised of the monks of the monastery. The distinction is framed in such a way that it is reminiscent of the two types of will that Anselm emphasises in his philosophical works with the family of the flesh representing the animalistic will and the family of the monastery representing the higher will. In addition, it serves to emphasise the closeness of the monastic groups and the way in which Anselm envisions the monastic family. Viewed in such a light the repeated names and rhetoric of joy can hardly be coincidental.

For Anselm, the sinner is not truly free and that true freedom comes only from the ethical goodness of leading a good life and, in the instance of a fallen individual, from the grace of God as he explained in *De libertate*. Obedience, therefore, is in no way contrary to freedom. Indeed, it can be seen as an ethical good and therefore a freeing act.

In a similar example of the restraint that ethical behaviour could place upon the physical freedom of an individual, Anselm writes to dissuade P., a Monk of St Martin of Séez, from traveling to Jerusalem (c1106/1107). In this example, Anselm uses the salutation formula to begin his argument for the desired outcome. By invoking the necessity of God's guidance, Anselm is *de facto* arguing in favour of monastic obedience, as, that is the manner in which a monk would typically be judged as to whether they were following the will of God.

ANSELM, SERVANT OF THE CHURCH OF CANTERBURY: TO HIS DEAR BROTHER P., MONK OF THE MONASTERY OF ST MARTIN OF SÉEZ, SENDING GREETING AND WISHING HIM ALWAYS TO BE GUIDED AND CONSOLED BY THE GRACE OF GOD.²³¹

²³⁰Anselm, Ep. 17 Salutat te domnus abbas ut filium carissimum; qui cuncta hic a me scripta sua dicta vult esse. Acquiesce igitur eius et nostris monitionibus, ut oboediendo benigno patri et concordando amico fratri laetifices - si diligis - patrem et fratrem. Saluta ex nostra parte dilectos fratres nostros domnum HERLUINUM et domnum OSBERNUM. Vale, et si quid apud te possum, cum citius poteris manda mihi, qualiter in voluntatem carnaliter alium diligentis - tuam dico - te reclines, vel in sententiam te spiritualiter diligentium declines.

²³¹Anselm, Ep. 410 ANSELMUS, servus ecclesiae Cantuariensis: dilecto fratri P., monacho coenobii Sancti Martini Sagii, salutem et gratia dei semper dirigi et consolari.

Anselm then proceeds to outline his reasons for refusing permission to the monk to leave for Jerusalem in remarkably simple and straightforward terms. Obedience to his superiors is, of course, primary amongst them:

Wherefore, first of all I tell you that this desire of yours does not come from a good quarter, nor is it good for the salvation of your soul. It is against your profession at which, before God, you promised stability in the monastery in which you took on the habit of a monk. It is also against the obedience due to the Pope who commanded by his great authority that monks should not presume to take on such a journey except for some religious persons who might usefully be employed in ruling the Church of God and in teaching the people, and even this only on the advice of and in obedience to their superior. I was in fact present when the Pope promulgated this decree. It is also against the obedience you owe to your abbot who hates this wish and curses it as a danger for your soul.²³²

In this example, Anselm shows the value of obedience on many levels and indeed the many levels upon which a monk would owe obedience were he behaving as he ought. The reference to papal authority provides the highest possible level of earthly obedience owed. Only those with an assigned purpose were allowed to undertake the trip and even then as an act of obedience or a confluence of wills. Anselm makes it clear that this is not the case in this instance; indeed, he goes a step further and states that not only would the action be disobedient, but it would be inappropriate for reasons other than simple disobedience alone.

A further pragmatic example is provided by Anselm's letter to Richard, a Monk of Bec, written before November 1097. Richard has consistently refused the orders of his Abbot and Anselm himself to moderate his fasting to a healthier level. While once more referring to the scorning of advice as ethically poor and as a lack of obedience, Anselm also begins to discuss the value of obedience and how it compares to other elements of positive ethical action.

²³²Anselm, Ep. 410 Unde in primis dico tibi, quia non est hoc desiderium tuum ex bona parte neque ad salutem animae tuae. Est enim contra professionem tuam, qua promisisti stabilitatem coram deo in monasterio, in quo habitum monachi accepisti; et est contra apostolici oboedientiam, qui praecepit magna auctoritate sua, ne monachi hanc viam arripere praesumerent, nisi aliqua persona religiosa, quae utilis esset ad regendam ecclesiam dei et ad docendum populum, et hoc non nisi consilio et oboedientia praelati. Ego praesens adfui, quando istam sententiam apostolicus promulgavit. Est etiam contra oboedientiam abbatis tui, cuius voluntas hoc odit et execratur sicut periculum animae tuae.

You promised so often to obey my will and his totally in this matter, and still you stubbornly follow your own will. I fear that while in your heart you wish to obtain a reward, or rather gain a reputation or empty prestige through fasting, you are more likely to incur punishment for your disobedience. Certainly, just as simple obedience merits a more valuable crown than abstinence from food beyond the common practice, so whoever scorns the first will be more severely punished than he who forsakes the second. Obedience can save a man without this sort of fasting; without obedience such fasting can only lead to damnation.²³³

This passage draws clear comparisons between earthly and eternal goods. The additional fasting has been characterised as an attempt to gain the earthly good of prestige, however, because of the earthly nature of this good, and the poor intention that drives the action, it leads to an eternal harm. After building his ethical case, and providing a stern reminder of the divine punishments for those who lack obedience, Anselm changes tone and returns to his original theme of love:

Comply therefore, comply and entrust yourself entirely to the disposition of your superior; if you want to retain my love for you, if you want to prove your love to me, if you do not want to continue making me sad and to burden the abbot you are under and the brothers with whom you live by your imprudence, then comply with this. It is quite clear that your body and your character cannot tolerate what your imprudence presumes to do. May the Lord almighty guide you in his path and in his truth.²³⁴

²³³ Anselm, Ep. 196 Cum scias quia multum te diligo, non deberes totiens tibi datum consilium et praeceptum meum contemnere, et contemnendo me et abbatem cui te commisi contristare. Totiens enim te monui et consului et praecepi tibi, ut indiscretas abstinentias et vexationes corporis tui secundum ordinationem praefati abbatis temperares, totiens promisisti quia in hac re meae et illius voluntati penitus oboedires, et adhuc pertinaciter tuae propriae voluntati adhaeres. Timeo ne, dum vis habere praemium seu potius famam aut inanem intra cor tuum gloriam abstinentis, incurras potius poenam inoboedientis.

²³⁴ See Ps 85:11; Anselm, Ep. 196 Certe, sint maiorem coronam meretur simplex oboedientia quam praeter communem usum escarum abstinentia, ita gravius ille punitur a quo illa contemnitur, quam a quo ista deseritur. Sine huiusmodi enim abstinentia potest oboedientia hominem salvare; sine oboedientia vero talis abstinentia non valet nisi damnare. Acquiesce igitur, acquiesce, et totum te praelati tui dispositioni committe, si mihi vis oboedire, si mihi vis placere, si dilectionem meam erga te vis servare, si tuam erga me vis probare, si me deinceps non vis contristare, et abbatem sub quo es et

The monk's repeated promise is a matter of the gravest concern for Anselm. It allows him to then stipulate that rather than a slip of the will which has caused an isolated occurrence that the monk actually desires and wills to gain an earthly reputation instead of gaining ground towards eternal salvation. The use of will in this context is strongly reminiscent of *De libertate*. The ensuing balance of ethical goods makes Anselm's case clear. Disobedience is a greater harm in any context, and especially in this one as it is causing physical harm to the monk, than he makes up through the additional fasting. The monks' individual freedom, therefore, is not limited in terms of actions, but is rigorously restricted according to the manner in which he can behave if he wishes to be virtuous.

The next example, written to Abbot Walter before 1078, provides an additional pragmatic background against which Anselm provided ethical commentary. Walter has seemingly deserted his Monastery and Anselm exhorts him to return and fulfil his role as Abbot. Once more Anselm uses the salutation formula to reiterate an ethical standpoint, in this case the teleology of man and the required ethical behaviour, before proceeding to begin his main point. It is particularly of note that Anselm begins his persuasion by contrasting his current sinful status with his potential for holiness:

TO HIS LORD AND VENERABLE FATHER, ABBOT WALTER: BROTHER
ANSELM OF BEC, A SINNER IN THIS LIFE, BY PROFESSION A MONK,
WISHING HIM HOLINESS IN THE PRESENT LIFE THAT HE MAY DESERVE
BLISS IN THE LIFE TO COME.²³⁵

Once more, obedience and counsel are shown as being intertwined. In this passage Anselm gives the subject one of his most direct treatments.

SINCE IT IS WRITTEN: Do everything with counsel, and you will not repent
afterwards of having done it and elsewhere: Since to rebel is like the sin of divination
and to be unwilling to submit is like the iniquity of idolatry, we should take great

fratres inter quos vivis tua indiscretione gravare. Nimis enim patet quia corpus tuum et natura tua tolerare nequit, quod indiscretio tua praesumit. Omnipotens dominus deducat te in via sua et in veritate sua.

²³⁵Anselm, Ep. 62 Domino et patri venerabili, abbati WALTERO: frater ANSELMUS Beccensis, vita peccator, habitu monachus, per praesentis vitae sanctitatem futurae mereri felicitatem.

care not to follow our own will excessively against all other advice, even if it appears to us to be right. For what appears right to a single person may not be right, since it is written: The way of a fool is right in his own eyes. And there are ways which seem right to men, but the end thereof descends to the depths of hell. Wherefore, lest judging our error to be right, according to the custom of fools, we follow the paths whose end descends to the depths of hell, a man should in no way commit himself to ordering his way of life according to his own unqualified judgement but should diligently weigh all things, lest he oppose the judgement of many, particularly the wise, or oppose obedience or mercy or, finally, charity.²³⁶

The will of the individual and the individual's capacity to determine ethically appropriate behaviour are questioned. In this manner, Anselm is able to argue against the decision of Abbot Walter without questioning his intent, for, although the action is ethically bad in Anselm's eyes, he allows for the fact that Abbot Walter may feel that he is taking a worthy course of action. The teleological position that Anselm began in the salutation returns with greater force, telling Walter that without making allowances for his own fallibility, he is descending towards hell.

The second portion of the letter moves from allusions of obedience to the practical implications of a disobedient act. In doing so Anselm enumerates the different types of obedience, and therefore obligations, which have been laid upon Walter and points out that his election was a part of the divine will that Walter ought to seek to serve. By failing to do so he is not using his capacity to do good for the monastery. It is his duty to protect the monks of the abbey and lead them towards salvation, a duty he is neglecting.

Hence it is extremely surprising that, against practically all advice, against the obedience laid on you by divine will through your archbishop and canonical

²³⁶Anselm, Ep. 62 Cum scriptum sit: "omnia fac cum consilio, et post factum non paenitebis"; et alibi: "quoniam quasi peccatum ariolandi est repugnare, et quasi scelus idololatriae nolle acquiescere": valde nobis cavendum est ne nostram contra omnium consilium nimium sequamur voluntatem, etiam si recta nobis videatur. Neque enim quidquid singulis rectum videtur rectum est, quoniam scriptum est: "Via stulti recta in oculis eius". Et: "Sunt viae quae videntur hominibus rectae, quarum finis usque ad profundum inferni descendit". Quapropter ne more stultorum errorem rectitudinem iudicantes teneamus vias, "quarum finis usque ad profundum inferni descendit": nequaquam unusquisque suo inexaminato iudicio vitae suae debet ordinem committere, sed diligenter, ne plurimorum et maxime sapientium iudicio aut oboedientiae aut misericordiae aut denique caritati repugnet, perpendere.

election, against mercy and charity, your holiness and your prudence, by deserting them, exposed the forsaken sheep committed to your pastoral care to being torn apart by prowling wolves when, by your care, you could have led at least one of them to salvation. Give in therefore. Your charity must give in and, drawn by so many prayers, return to your monastery and mercifully resume the abandoned guardianship, so that by consoling and helping the desolate you may deserve the reward of divine consolation and assistance. For the malicious accusation which used to terrify you most has been so quenched by the abbot of Saint Arnulf through the common assent of his community and the brothers of your monastery that it cannot now hinder you in any way.²³⁷

Heavenly assistance and rewards are promised, but on the condition that Walter works to deserve them. Anselm acknowledges, at the end of the letter, that Walter had a reason for not initially wishing to take up the position, but stipulates that it is no longer a valid one. It is clear from the context of this statement that Anselm felt that Walter's decision was incorrect irrespective of the 'malicious accusation'. Walter could only behave in virtuous fashion by taking up the position and working to ensure that his divinely given responsibility and blessing was fulfilled.

The next example, to Hugh the Prior, leads Visser and Williams to accuse Anselm of a 'notable deficiency' in tending to 'encourage a kind of passivity'.²³⁸ They further stipulate that the letter 'offers no advice' and that Anselm 'seems to regard the whole thing as hopeless'.²³⁹ As will be outlined below, there are a number of objections that can be made to this position.

²³⁷Anselm, Ep. 62 Unde magis est mirandum, cur vestra sanctitas vestra que prudentia fere contra omnium consilium, contra oboedientiam sibi divina dispositione per archiepiscopum suum et regularem electionem iniunctam, contra misericordiam et caritatem, oves sibi commissas pastoralis cura destitutas lupis infestantibus lacerandas deserendo exponit, quamdiu vel unam considerat sua cura ad salutem posse proficere. Acquiescat igitur vestra caritas, acquiescat, et tot orationibus astricta ad monasterium suum redeat, curam que abiectam misericorditer resumatur, ut desolatos consolando et adiuvando divinae consolationis et auxilii recompensationem mereatur. Nam calumnia quae vos maxime terrere solet, ab abbate Sancti Arnulfi sic est per communem eius et fratrum vestri monasterii consensum extincta, ut iam nullo modo vos impediatur.

²³⁸ Visser and Williams, *Anselm* p. 200.

²³⁹ Visser and Williams, *Anselm* p. 200.

The letter shows that obedience is more critical than efficacy in a monastic context. As such, to obey is more important than a number of other virtues. This is only bounded by a ban on obedience necessitating evil or the path to salvation is blocked. Naturally Anselm draws the line at such a point and stipulates that it should never occur.

The salutation formula sets the tone for the remainder of the letter by phrasing Anselm in terms of his own behaviour, existence, and teleology. By so doing, the manner in which his arguments unfold have been placed in the context of his ethical philosophy and, in addition, are seen to be solely based upon a singular aim.

TO HUGH, HIS LORD DESERVEDLY REVERED FOR HIS HOLINESS, HIS BROTHER, DULY LOVED OUT OF CHARITY: BROTHER ANSELM, [WHO HOPES] TO LIVE THIS LIFE IN A SAINTLY WAY IN PROSPERITY AND THE NEXT BLISSFULLY FOR ETERNITY.²⁴⁰

The letter proper begins with carefully set parameters from which it is clear that Anselm is dictating the fashion in which Hugh ought to behave as opposed to the manner in which Hugh has behaved already. Hugh is first to beg leave of his duties, so that he might surrender them out of obedience and resolve the issue without harm occurring to any involved, or indeed, to the monks of the monastery. If he is not granted leave to do so he is to carry out his duties with all due diligence and obedience. Harsh as this may seem, Anselm spends the rest of the letter explaining why this is the best course of action for both Hugh and the monastery.

Anselm, as can be seen repeatedly throughout his letter collection, believes that peace is the foundation upon which all other virtues can grow and thrive. The reason why Hugh must bear the burden if he is not to be relieved of his tasks is that any other course of action would disrupt the peace of the monastery. This would occur either through Hugh simply leaving, or through open disagreement with the abbot. The action of disrupting the peace through disobedience would be ethically bad for Hugh and endanger the souls of the other monks. Hugh will be judged positively for this action as his responsibility to the monastery is for the

²⁴⁰Anselm, Ep. 6 Domino merito sanctitatis reverendo et fratri debito caritatis diligendo HUGONI: frater ANSELMUS in hac vita sancte vivere cum prosperitate, in futura feliciter cum aeternitate.

greatest good of the other monks and this is the best course of action that he is able to take within that remit without disposing of the abbot, something that is not his responsibility and, indeed, would be tantamount to usurping a will greater than his own.

If you are unable to hold office harmoniously with him with whom you have to share it, it is better for both of you, if having humbly begged for and been granted permission you rest from the worry of your burden, rather than hurt each other gravely by quarrelling under its weight. And if he will not concede this to you, it is better for you to bear the burden, even unprofitably, in obedience, than to cast it off impatiently in disobedience. But if you have experienced that the matter is not improved but aggravated by our advice, it is better, by remaining mute and silent with the prophet for the sake of good, to keep peace with all men as far as you can, according to the Apostle, than to give an occasion to the evil one by uttering good words uselessly. For since the prime responsibility was entrusted to him, not to you, you will not be held responsible if, through the fault of a shepherd who ignored your advice, the flock is not governed well.²⁴¹

Naturally there are limitations to this sort of logic. If the damage that would be done by disobedience is less than the damage that is being done to the abbey, in terms of forcing the monks to do evil, or in terms of blocking the pathway to salvation, then Hugh should reassess the situation and capitulate in neither instance. Hugh has agreed, as was discussed at the beginning of the chapter to adhere to the Rule of Saint Benedict and as such his obedience and stability are binding facets of his ethical existence. Anselm warns Hugh that an attempt to remove himself from the Abbot's presence, if the Abbot is not preventing him from living a good life, is to go against God's desires and to lack humility.

²⁴¹Anselm, Ep. 6 Si cum eo, cum quo vobis res est, onus concorditer ferre non potestis, salubrius ambobus est, ut vos humiliter ab eo postulata et concessa licentia ab ipsius oneris sollicitudine quiescatis, quam sub ipso pondere discordantes invicem vos graviter laedatis. Quod si ipse vobis non concesserit, melius est vobis onus etiam inutiliter sustinere per oboedientiam, quam proicere impatienter per inoboedientiam. Et si experti estis quia consilio vestro non corrigitur sed laeditur, melius est ut obmutescendo et silendo 'a bonis' cum Propheta, secundum Apostolum 'quod ex vobis est, cum omnibus hominibus pacem' habeatis, quam bona inutiliter loquendo occasionem maligno praebeatis. Nam quoniam non vobis, sed illi principatus curae commissus est, non a vobis exigitur, si neglecto vestro consilio pastoris culpa grex bene non regitur.

Furthermore, as long as he does not force you to turn from good to evil, it is not advisable for you to dare to disregard the vow of submission and stability you once professed by changing your abode, except with his consent, as long as you can envisage any reason or opportunity that would enable you somehow to live well under his authority. If his headship is in any way a hindrance to your endeavors, yet does not block the path of salvation, it is better that, being judged unworthy of greater grace by the hidden judgement of God and your sins you live humbly without sin with fewer blessings that strive to greater ones by mortal sin. For no one ought willingly to risk death unless he cannot otherwise evade a worse death.²⁴²

The final line of this section is important. In it Anselm is warning Hugh that by trying to leave his duties and the abbey he is risking sinful behaviour. The only possible justification, therefore, can be if his stay at the abbey is forcing him to sin in greater measure than would otherwise occur should he try to leave.

May almighty God and our Lord Jesus Christ, 'wonderful counsellor' and angel of great counsel, so teach you to do his will that he may grant you to see his glory, holy lord and most beloved brother.²⁴³

Christ's role as a 'wonderful counsellor' is important in this context. It signifies Anselm's desire for Hugh to heed his words and recognise a better ethical decision than Hugh had been planning to make.

In his letter of 1076 to Prior Henry, Anselm explains that patience is a critical component of obedience, allowing man to maintain his virtue through sacrifice and to be obedient in an appropriate manner. The thrust of the letter begins in the salutation formula, with Anselm

²⁴² Anselm, Ep. 6 Nec vobis tamen consulendum est, quamdiu ipse vos non cogit a bono in malum devertere, ut subiectionem stabilitatem que quam professi estis audeatis, nisi eo concedente, migrando contemnere, si sub eo undecumque consilium facultatem que bene vivendi vobis videtis suppetere. Quod si in aliquo vestris studiis est impedimento eius praelatio, ut tamen viam salutis non obstruat, satius est ut occulto dei iudicio vestris que peccatis vos indignos maiori gratia iudicantes, in minoribus bonis humiliter sine peccato vivatis, quam ad maiora per peccatum mortis tendatis. Non enim quis sponte mortem debet incurrere, nisi cum aliter peiorem mortem non potest evadere.

²⁴³ Anselm, Ep. 6 Omnipotens deus et dominus noster IESUS Christus, "admirabilis consiliarius" et magni consilii angelus, sic doceat vos facere voluntatem suam, ut donet vobis videre gloriam suam, domine sancte et frater carissime.

re-phrasing the query in terms of his own desire to live a good life temporally, and by so doing be in a position to be admitted into heaven.

TO HIS FELLOW-MONK AND DEAREST BROTHER, DOM PRIOR HENRY:
BROTHER ANSELM, WISHING HE MAY DESERVE, THROUGH A LONG-
LASTING GOOD LIFE, A BLESSED LIFE IN ETERNITY.²⁴⁴

The beginning of his advice to Prior Henry is phrased in terms of broad value statements. Henry's gifts of money are a valued form of charity to Bec, but the more valuable charity is that Henry is willing to use his capacity for ethical good and to intend that something positive occurs from it. The very fact that Henry is willing to ask counsel makes him a good and wise man, but he is even better because he has promised to follow that advice.

DOM ABBOT AND THE COMMUNITY of our brothers received with joy, praised and loved the gifts of your charity, but certainly[they cherished] much more that very charity which is never unwilling to do whatever it can but ever willing to do whatever it can. Dom Abbot also gratefully accepted, and my humble self gratefully read and heard, that your prudence asked his advice as a father and mine as a brother, and that you promised to act according to it in all things. Thus it becomes the wise man to make use of wise counsel. Indeed it is wise counsel, as you know, that one takes care to do everything with counsel.²⁴⁵

Having dispensed with the niceties of the beginning of the letter, Anselm moves on to his primary concern: answering Henry's questions about advice and patience. This is initially accomplished in quite pessimistic terms with ample biblical backing. As if to mitigate such concerns, Anselm once more praises Henry for those to whom he has come seeking advice.

²⁴⁴Anselm, Ep. 73 Domino et fratri carissimo, domno priori HENRICO: frater ANSELMUS per diuturnam bonam vitam mereri aeterne beatam vitam.

²⁴⁵ Ct. Si 32:24; RB 3:13; Anselm, Ep. 73 Domnus abbas et fratrum nostrorum congregatio laeti susceperunt, laudaverunt, amaverunt munera vestrae caritatis; sed multo utique magis ipsam caritatem, quae numquam non vult quantum potest et semper vult quantum potest. Gratanter quoque suscepit domnus abbas et gratanter legit et audivit mea parvitas, quod prudentia vestra consilium eius ut patris et meum ut fratris petivit et secundum illud per omnia se facturum promisit. Sic namque decet sapientem, sapienti scilicet uti consilio. Sapiens quippe consilium est, sicut scitis, quod consulit omnia facere cum consilio.

Since, therefore, the whole matter on which you consult us concerns advice in obedience and patience, and it is written that God prefers obedience and sacrifice,²⁴⁶ and that patience has its perfect work²⁴⁷ you seek and receive advice nowhere more rightly than from someone to whom you owe obedience, and you serve no one more perfectly than when you hold firmly to patience. Dom Abbot therefore advises this, begs this, and, that your exertions find satisfaction not merely in consulting and asking – which is to be praised – but also obey on being commanded – which is to be crowned with glory – he commands this, and I, your brother and loving friend, advise and urge this: that the basis of your whole life should rest on these two pillars, namely, obedience and patience.²⁴⁸

Obedience in this context has been phrased as a burden of sorts, yet a burden that brings with it rewards in the life to come, if it is suffered patiently and appropriately. The advice, therefore, from both Anselm and the abbot, which ought to be obeyed as Henry owes obedience to the abbot, is to rest upon the two pillars of obedience and patience even if it requires ignoring his present troubles and disagreements with Lanfranc.

Anselm then proceeds to extol the importance of patience. Patience, is critical in both the innocent and the guilty, he states. In the guilty, it is an act of contrition and the beginning of retribution, whereas in the latter it ensures that the innocent maintain their path of ethical behaviour.

And indeed, as to patience, your love knows well that it is absolutely essential not only when someone deserves to be punished, but even when someone innocent is crushed it should be freely displayed. In the former case impatience is to be cursed, lest the guilty be more miserably damned; but in the latter case patience is to be

²⁴⁶ 1 Sam 15:22, Si 4:17.

²⁴⁷ Jm 1:4.

²⁴⁸ Anselm, Ep. 73 Cum igitur totum rei, de qua consulitis, consistat consilium in oboedientia et patientia, et scriptum sit quia oboedientiam mavult deus quam sacrificium, et quia patientia opus perfectum habet: nullius iustius petit et suscipitis consilium, quam illius cui debetis oboedientiam; et nullum servatis perfectius, quam cum fortiter tenetis patientiam. Hoc igitur consulit dominus abbas, hoc rogat, et ut non solum consulenti et roganti vestra strenuitas acquiescat - quod est laudandum -, sed et praecipienti oboediat - quod est coronandum -, hoc praecipit, hoc ego frater et amator vester consulo et flagito: ut totius vitae vestrae status his duabus nitatur columnis, scilicet oboedientia et patientia.

preserved, so that the innocent may more happily be crowned. As to obedience however, Dom Abbot orders this – which I think you should not question -: that whenever you obey the reverend lord, our father Archbishop Lanfranc, the abbot will accept it as if he himself were being obeyed; indeed even more gratefully than if you obey him because he wants you to obey Lanfranc through him; and he will consider this obedience of yours greater the more you not only obey him for his own sake, but also obey Lanfranc because of him. However, if we consider ourselves and him whom we invite you to obey, we can, without doubt, find many reasons in ourselves and in him why we should freely and diligently obey him.²⁴⁹

In terms of the case in hand, Anselm makes it exceptionally clear that the will of both Anselm and the abbot is for Henry to obey Lanfranc as though he were owed obedience in the same sense as Henry's professed obedience to the abbot. But Anselm goes a step further and, in a sense, defines a new parameter within which obedience ought to take place, that of deserved obedience. Lanfranc is such a worthy man, Anselm maintains, that Henry ought to obey him on the basis of his merit alone even if it were not the case that he had been ordered to do so by those to whom he already owed obedience.

Anselm's letter to Abbot William and the Monks of Bec is important for the understanding of the relationship between those who obeyed and those who were to be obeyed. This letter is often read as a statement of Anselm's wish to have been allowed to live out his days in the peace of the monastery without his elevation to the Archbishopric. While it is not within the remit of this study to analyse that aspect of the letter, it is also an important statement about obedience within monastic communities and the church in general. The letter, while personal in terms of the content that Anselm feels is important, is written to be read aloud to

²⁴⁹Anselm, Ep. 73 Et quidem de patientia bene novit vestra dilectio quia non solum cum meritis punitur, violenter est exigenda; sed etiam cum immeritis affligitur, libenter est exhibenda. Ibi enim execranda est impatientia, ne nocens infelicius damnetur; hic servanda est patientia, ut innocens felicius coronetur. De oboedientia vero hoc mandat domnus abbas - quod nec dubitare vos arbitror - quoniam quidquid reverendo domino ac patri nostro archiepiscopo LANFRANCO oboeditis, sic illud accipit, velut si sibi oboediretur; immo tanto gratius, quam si sibi oboediretis, quanto ipse per semet illi oboedire desiderat, et quanto in eo quod non solum ipsi, sed et alii propter ipsum oboeditis, maiorem ipsam vestram oboedientiam considerat. Quamquam si consideremus nos et illum, cui vos oboedire invitamus, multa procul dubio in nobis et in illo sint, cur nos illi sponte studiose que oboedire debeamus.

a large group and therefore the contents of the letter are intended for general consumption. The principles enclosed, therefore, are most likely to be ones which are broadly accepted or well known to the audience prior to sending.

The beginning of the letter speaks to Anselm's joy at the peace of the Abbey of Bec and the monks therein. He does so with obvious longing and a desire that he could be part of their joy. He makes clear that the political changes that have recently occurred are the will of God, who, while pleasing him in some regards, has not entirely granted him what he wished for. He goes on to speak of the ways in which 'divine providence' has entangled him in 'a greater turmoil of affairs than before'. Implicit within this statement is the tacit point that he is obeying divine providence by leaving Bec. He worries that in so doing his soul may be endangered, but still he obeys:

There was one thing I desired incessantly by contemplating his design, that, after you had provided for the vacant abbacy before my death, I might await the end of my life with joy and be able to lead a peaceful life among you set apart from every kind of worldly affair. But divine Providence did not wish to fulfil my desire: on the contrary it decided to entangle me in a greater turmoil of affairs than before, as I greatly fear, to the grave detriment of my soul. Therefore, the more I rejoice that I was listened to by God in the one case, the more I grieve that he did not wish to listen to me in the other.²⁵⁰

Having shown his own obedience, he is therefore able to demand the same for his fellow monks in his requests for how they maintain their lives and affairs. The monks must work to improve their holy intention, a common theme in Anselm's writings, and, critically, they must show obedience and humility. Anselm makes the point that their new abbot has been placed over them by the will of God. As such, obeying their abbot is obeying the will of God

²⁵⁰Anselm, Ep. 165 Sed cum illud indesinenter eius intentionis speculatione desiderarem, ut et vobis ante mortem meam consultis finem vitae cum gaudio exspectare et ab omni mundanarum specie rerum segregatus quietam inter vos vitam possem agere: noluit in hac parte superna providentia desiderium meum adimplere, sed ad magnum, ut valde pertimesco, animae meae detrimentum maioribus quam ante rerum tumultibus voluit implicare. Proinde quantum in uno quod a deo exauditus sum gaudeo, tantum in alio quod exaudire me noluit doleo.

and critical to their ethical and spiritual well-being. His use of scriptural authority is no doubt mostly caused by the intended recipients:

However, bearing paternal solicitude for you now as ways, I admonish you as my dearest sons, as those whom I loved and wish to continue to love with most tender affection in the compassion of Christ, to be of one mind toward one another,²⁵¹ according to the holy Apostle. May you daily direct the intention of your souls towards better things, and show humble obedience in all things towards him whom divine loving kindness wished to place over you. Remember the command by which the same Apostle admonishes us, saying: Obey your superiors and subject yourselves to them.²⁵²

The passage ends with a display of how intention and obedience are linked as a part of Anselm's ethical philosophy. Anselm then turns his attention to Abbot William and delivers a key element of his normative philosophy:

To you, my dearest brother William, tested by my soul in every observance of holy religion, whom the grace of God decided to make pastor after me over such a holy flock of monks, I offer this suggestion: Take such care of the souls of the brothers placed under your rule that, with the protection of God, the snares of the crafty enemy may not succeed in harming them by any device but, protected by the guardianship of your care, they may rejoice in having found the shelter of a good shepherd. Hasten then to show yourself moderate in everything you do, so that grace may not exclude justice nor justice grace by any sort of secret dealing; you should always combine the one with the other so that in both, the discipline of the monastery may be maintained by inviolable righteousness. Never cast out of your

²⁵¹ Rom 12:16.

²⁵² Hebr 13:17; Anselm, Ep. 165 Paternam tamen nunc - sicut semper - sollicitudinem pro vobis gerens, moneo vos sicut filios meos carissimos, et sicut eos quos in visceribus Christi tenerrimo semper affectu dilexi et diligere volo, ut secundum beati apostoli vocem "id ipsum invicem" sentiatis, propositum animi ad meliora cotidie dirigatis, et ei quem divina pietas vobis praeesse voluit, humilem in omnibus oboedientiam exhibeatis, memores illius praecepti, quo nos idem apostolus admonet dicens: "Oboedite praepositis vestris et subicite vos eis".

soul what the Lord says to the negligent pastor through Solomon: My son, if you have become surety for your friend, you have given your pledge to a stranger.²⁵³

He is best able to watch over his flock by ensuring that his guidance brings them closer to the joy of God. In so doing, he is to moderate his behaviour towards them by being both graceful and just in combination. Both are necessary for the good of the monastery and it is clear that in this instance Anselm is far from advising the deontological, duty based conception of ethical behaviour which is ascribed to him by the most prominent modern commentators of Anselm's ethical thought.²⁵⁴ The difference in this instance is the behaviour that an individual must employ when making their own decisions in comparison with how they must treat other individuals. By allowing grace to temper justice when seeking obedience, the abbot is able to allow for epistemological uncertainty yet still keep peace amongst his flock. The next example provided by Anselm, Proverbs 6:1, serves to reinforce this reading. As you cannot know the manner in which another has behaved or what his intentions may be in all circumstances, caution must be employed when acting as a guarantor. Anselm finishes the section by expressing his confidence that Abbot William will be successful in serving the community well and following such precepts.

Nevertheless, I address you all with this last entreaty: Do not allow the love of your kindness for me, which I have always experienced, to cool down, because even though I cannot be bodily present with you yet I never cease to be with you through the affection of my heart. Remember too how I always used to gain friends for the

²⁵³ Prov 6:1; Anselm, Ep. 165 Tibi autem, carissime frater WILLELME et in omni sanctae religionis observantia animo meo probate, quem dei gratia tam sancto monachorum gregi rectorem post me fieri constituit: hanc facio suggestionem, ut ita de animabus fratrum sub tuo regimine consistentium sollicitus existas, quatenus callidi hostis insidiae nulla eis arte, protegente deo, nocere valeant, sed sollicitudinis tuae custodia vallati, boni pastoris tutamina se invenisse gaudeant. Sic que te in omnibus quae agis moderatum exhibere festines, ut neque iustitiam gratia neque gratiam iustitia qualibet umquam privata subreptione excludat, sed ita altero semper alterum coniungas, ut in utroque monasterii ordo inviolata rectitudine servari valeat. Numquam ab animo tuo excidat quod dominus negligenti pastori per SALOMONEM dicit: "Fili mi, si sponderis pro amico tuo, defixisti apud extraneum manum tuam. Illaqueatus es verbis oris tui et captus propriis sermonibus tuis". Plura me loqui delectaret, si aut epistolaris brevitatis permitteret, aut tua sanctitas melius facere quam ego dicere nesciret.

²⁵⁴ The two most prominent being Brower (Brower, J. E., 'Anselm on Ethics', *The Cambridge Companion to Anselm* ed. Davies, B. and Leftow, B. (Cambridge, 2004) pp. 222 - 256.) and Visser and Williams (Visser, S. and Williams, T., *Anselm* (Oxford, 2009) pp. 193 - 211).

church of Bec: following this example, hasten to gain friends for yourselves from all sides by exercising the good deed of hospitality, dispensing generosity to all men, and when you do not have the opportunity of doing good works, by according at least the gift of a kind word.²⁵⁵ Never consider that you have enough friends, but whether rich or poor, let them all be bound to you by brotherly love. This will be to the advantage of your church and promote the welfare of those you love.²⁵⁶

Anselm's final instructions in the letter reiterate a number of the main themes of his normative philosophy. Generosity is highlighted as a critical virtue, portrayed as both good for the monks in a spiritual and temporal sense. Taking the opportunities provided to do good works and enacting that capacity, even if it entails as little as a kind word is also brought out. Lastly, Anselm reminds the monks that the value of those friends that they are able to acquire ought not to be measured in wealth, but rather in the love they possess for the monastery.

Anselm's letter to Prior Heny and the Monks of Christ Church Canterbury (c1095) shows the extent to which lack of obedience could pose dangers to the monastic environment and setting. The well-being of the monastery was often contingent upon such disciplines. In this case, the controversy seems to have involved recently arrived Norman and previously resident Anglo-Saxon monks refusing to co-operate.

I HEAR THAT THERE ARE SCANDALS and disagreements among you because there are certain ones among you who refuse to subject themselves to Dom Prior. They indiscriminately carry out, completely without his knowledge and permission, things which ought only to be done with his permission. When they are reprehended in Chapter by him or anyone else they disdain to subject themselves to

²⁵⁵ Anselm is referring to RB 31.

²⁵⁶ Anselm, Ep. 165 Omnes tamen vos hac postrema supplicatione convenio, ut expertum semper dulcedinis vestrae amorem erga me tepescere non sinatis, quoniam ego, etsi corporali praesentia vobis cum esse nequeo, cordis tamen amore vobis cum manere numquam desisto. Memores etiam estote qua ratione semper ecclesiae Beccensi amicos acquirere consuevi; et hoc exemplo amicos vobis undecumque acquirere festinate, hospitalitatis bonum sectando, benignitatem omnibus impendendo, et, ubi facultas operis defuerit, affabilis sermonis gratiam porrigendo. Nec umquam satis vos habere amicos credatis, sed sive divites sive pauperes, omnes vobis in amore fraternitatis conglutinate, quatenus hoc et ad vestrae ecclesiae utilitatem proficere et ad eorum quos diligitis salutem valeat pertinere.

his judgement in the humility of the Rule, and moreover they state that they do all this by our authority. From this, disputes, as of different sects and dissenting factions, as well as discords, grow up among you.²⁵⁷

Scandals and disagreements are the results of disobedience and a failure of the monks to subject themselves to their Prior's authority. From this adherence to the Rule is becoming lax due to a lack of humility and the monks are fragmenting into disparate groups.

On this matter I wish your love to know that it never was, nor with God's protection will it ever be my will, that such a great and condemnable disorder should arise in the church entrusted to my government nor, if any other case arises, should it be encouraged or permitted. While reserving our superior authority, I order all of you to submit yourselves with humble generosity and generous meekness, as you would to me, to Dom Prior and after him to the Subprior in all that concerns asking permission, carrying out orders, and judging negligence. Since some of you lay the chief responsibility for the aforesaid complaints upon Dom William, I say to him personally that I never wished, nor do I wish, that he should disobediently resist the Prior in any way. Nor do I establish anything different from what you all heard me request and counsel you concerning him in Chapter, both because of the respect due to the memory of our lord and father, Archbishop Lanfranc, and because of his infirmity. Nevertheless in no way do I permit this to be done without discretion and humble obedience.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁷Anselm, Ep. 182 Audio inter vos esse scandala et murmurationes, quia quidam sunt inter vos, qui se domno priori subicere contemnunt, et ea quae licentia eius facienda sunt, illo omnino nesciente et sine eius licentia passim faciunt; et cum ab eo vel ab aliquo reprehenduntur in capitulo, eius se iudicio regulari humilitate subdere despiciunt, et insuper hoc se totum nostra auctoritate facere affirmant. Unde quasi diversae sectae et partium dissidentium lites inter vos nascuntur et discordiae.

²⁵⁸Anselm, Ep. 182 Qua de re vestram dilectionem scire volo quia numquam in nostra voluntate fuit nec deo protegente erit, ut in ecclesia mihi ad regendum commissa tanta et tam reprobanda inordinatio oriatur, aut si aliquo casu oritur, nutriatur aut permittatur. Praecipio igitur, ut omnes sicut mihi, nostra servata praelatione, et in petendis licentiis et in exsequendis mandatis et in iudicandis negligentis domno priori et post illum subpriori subditi sitis humili benignitate et benigna mansuetudine. Et quoniam praefatae murmurationis causam et pondus super domnum WILLELMUM quidam maxime imponunt: de illo nominatim dico quia numquam volui nec volo, ut aliquo modo priori inoboedienter resistat; nec de illo aliud statuo, quam quod vobis audientibus in capitulo de illo precatus sum et consului, cum propter memoriam domini et patris nostri

Such an occurrence is expressly against Anselm's will and he makes it clear that any who are not obeying Prior Henry expressly are disobeying him as well. Obedience is an absolute requirement in the monastic community for the effective functioning of the monastery. This requires a united hierarchy and an accompanying authority that allows all involved to live in peace and therefore be capable of progressing towards perfection.

Of course, not all monks were obedient and it was necessary at times for punishments to be assigned. Although relatively infrequent in Anselm's corpus of letters, those addressing punishment and forgiveness provide yet another example of how Anselm wished individuals to be treated and, as such, are an important component of his normative philosophy. Due to the relative infrequency of direct statements involving precise punishments, it is not the purpose of this section of the thesis to espouse a precise definition of what punishments were deemed appropriate. Rather, the examples that are available effectively show what behaviours were deemed necessary to correct punitively and the manner in which Anselm was inclined to speak about punishment in general.

In the spring of 1086 Anselm wrote to Henry, urging him to become a monk. While most of the letter is not relevant to the current discussion, Anselm provides a passage that is interesting not only in terms of Anselm's views on punishment, but because it provides a glimpse of the sorts of statements others were making about punishment at the time. The long-standing theme of oaths and commitment is readily present, as is an analysis of how intention affects how God views man's sin:

But many say: God is more angered at the monk who sins than at others, because he falls from a loftier commitment. This is true as long as he is in sin. But surely God receives the penitent monk more kindly and more tenderly if he returns to his commitment than [he does] the non-monk who has not even reached this commitment. For even after serious sin, the man whose commitment, both before and afterwards, is such that he cannot have a greater, pleases God more than

archiepiscopi LANFRANCI, tum propter infirmitatem eius. Quod tamen non sine discretione et humili oboedientia fieri ullatenus concedo.

someone who, either before or after a similar sin, neither wishes nor intends to do better, because he is unable to do it.²⁵⁹

It is clear from the end of the passage that, from Anselm's perspective, sin was an inevitable part of human existence and a commonality of man. The difference that man could make, in the eyes of God, was the extent to which he strove to be ethically good. A monastic commitment provided an ideal foundation, not only for leading the good life, but for repentance when sin inevitably occurred.

Anselm's letter to Bernard, a monk of Chester, in c1102 provides a fascinating and in-depth discussion of how punishments out to be carried out and the merits involved. It specifically discusses the ethicality of punishment in a comprehensive and normative fashion. The references to individuals of differing wealth and social stature give increased evidence to the idea that this is a firm aspect of Anselm's philosophy and that he intends it to be coherent in terms of the rest of Anselm's ethical philosophy. Once more, obedience is given pride of place, showing that obeying the will of a superior is a greater virtue than adhering to one's own will.

I HAVE HEARD FROM YOUR LORD ABBOT that you judge it to be of greater merit for a monk to scourge himself or to demand to be scourged by somebody else than for him to receive a beating in chapter at the command of his superior, and not of his own will. But it is not as you think. The sentence someone freely passes himself is royal, but the one he suffers in chapter through obedience is monastic. One springs from one's own will, the other from obedience and not from one's own will. The one I call royal is what kings and proud rich men often command to be done to themselves; the one I call monastic, however, is received not by those who command but by those who obey. The royal sentence is lighter the more it agrees with the will of the one who suffers it, the monastic sentence is the more severe the

²⁵⁹Anselm, Ep. 121 Sed dicunt multi: Gravius irascitur deus peccanti monacho quam alii, quia de proposito altiori cadit. Hoc verum est, quamdiu est in peccato. Sed certe benignius et familiaris suscipit deus monachum paenitentem, si ad suum propositum redit, quam non-monachum, qui ad idem propositum non venit. Plus namque placet deo, etiam post grave peccatum, cuius propositum est et ante et post quo maius habere non potest, quam ille, qui nec ante nec post simile peccatum vult proponere quo melius non potest.

more it disagrees with the will of the one who bears it. The royal sentence displays that the one suffering belongs to himself, the monastic sentence proves that he does not belong to himself.²⁶⁰

The first portion of the letter provides a detailed examination of how aligning an individual's will with that of others is a critical aspect of punishment. In other letters Anselm made a similar comparison with the will aligning to peace. In this context he proceeds to show how it is an essential element of humility and, as such, obedience:

Although a king or rich man voluntarily receiving a beating humbly shows that he is a sinner, yet he would not patiently subject himself to such a humiliation on the order of anyone else but would resist with all his strength whoever commanded it. When a monk, however, subjects himself humbly in chapter to the lashes prescribed by a superior, truth judges this to be of greater merit the more deeply and sincerely the monk humbles himself in comparison with the king. The latter humbles himself before God alone because he is aware of his sins, whereas the former humbles himself even before a man because of obedience. Indeed, he who humbles himself before God and man for the sake of God is more humble than he who humbles himself before God alone and not at human command. Therefore, if he who humbles himself will be exalted,²⁶¹ then he who humbles himself more will be exalted more.²⁶²

²⁶⁰Anselm, Ep. 233 *Audivi a domino abbate tuo quod maioris meriti iudicas, cum monachus se aut verberat aut ab alio se verberari postulat, quam cum in capitulo ex praecepto praelati, non ex sua voluntate vapulat. Quod non ita est, sicut existimas. Illud enim iudicium quod sponte sibi aliquis indicit, regale est. Illud vero quod per oboedientiam in capitulo sustinet, monachicum est. Alterum est ex sua voluntate, alterum ex oboedientia, non ex sua voluntate. Illud quod regale dico, saepe sibi reges et superbi divites fieri praecipunt. Illud vero quod monachicum dico, non praecipientes sed oboedientes suscipiunt. Regale tanto levius est, quanto voluntati sustinentis concordat. Monachicum autem tanto gravius, quanto a voluntate patientis discordat. In regali iudicio ostenditur sustinens esse suus, in monachico probatur non esse suus.*

²⁶¹Lk 14:11.

²⁶²Anselm, Ep. 233 *Nam quamvis rex aut dives, cum sponte vapulat, se peccatorem humiliter ostendat: nulla tamen alterius hominis iussione huic humilitati se patiens subderet, sed iubenti omnibus viribus resisteret. Cum autem monachus ex sententia praelati in capitulo humiliter flagellis se subicit, tanto maioris meriti hunc esse veritas iudicat, quanto magis et verius se quam ille humiliat. Ille namque se soli deo humiliat propter peccatorum conscientiam, iste vero etiam homini propter oboedientiam.*

Anselm backs up these arguments with a return to some of his more complex philosophical themes, notably, the distinction between the types of will. It is natural for man to resist punishment, or to wish to do so, but acceptance comes from the higher will and man is thus able to repent, accept punishment, and attain forgiveness:

I said earlier that when a monk receives a beating and this disagrees with his will, you should not understand this as if he did not wish to bear this patiently with the will of obedience, but rather that according to his nature he would not wish to suffer bodily pain. If you say: 'I do not shun a public beating as much for the pain – which I would feel in private as well – as for the shame,' you should know that whoever rejoices to suffer this for the sake of obedience is stronger. Be certain that one beating of a monk borne in obedience is of greater merit than innumerable ones taken on through the heart's own choice. But if a monk is such that his heart is always prepared to receive a beating without a murmur in obedience, then, whether he is beaten in private or in public, we ought to judge him to be a man of great merit.²⁶³

As all men sin, and therefore must repent, the manner in which it is accomplished and the ability of monastic communities became critical elements to life and a way in which man could even gain merit. This merit is, however, contingent upon the conduct of the monk. Were the monk to wish that the beatings were public so that others could see how stoically he bore them, then his pride at wishing to be admired would undo the gains of his humility in bearing the beatings patiently. Ultimately, intent is therefore the critical factor in determining how a punishment is received.

Humilior autem est qui et deo et homini propter deum se humiliat, quam qui soli deo et non humanae iussioni se humiliat. Ergo si "qui se humiliat, exaltabitur"; qui se magis humiliat, magis exaltabitur.

²⁶³Anselm, Ep. 233 Quod autem dixi, cum monachus vapulat, hoc a sua voluntate discordare, non ita intelligas, quasi nolit hoc oboedienti voluntate patienter portare, sed quoniam ex naturali appetitu carnis dolorem nolle tolerare. Quod si dicis: non tam fugio publicam vapulationem propter dolores, quos et secrete sentio, quam propter verecundiam: scito quia ille fortior est, qui hanc quoque sustinere gaudet propter oboedientiam. Certus ergo esto quia maioris meriti est una vapulatio monachi tolerata per oboedientiam, quam innumerabiles acceptae per propriam sententiam. Sed cum talis est monachus, ut et semper habeat cor paratum sine murmuratione per oboedientiam vapulare: tunc sive secrete sive publice vapulet, magni meriti eum debemus iudicare.

The next example, to Prior Henry written in 1106 or 1107, shows the importance of forgiveness in monastic environments. Clearly effective punishment and forgiveness were of critical concern in tight-knit communities and, as the passage below illustrates, it was not always the case that the mechanisms in place resolved all emotional responses to certain situations:

In that very letter I found a pardon for some fault granted with that same spontaneous kindness to your beloved and mine. Since your humble servant, our brother Osbern, knowing that like him he sins not through pride but through ignorance, does not feel he has been forgiven, I perceive that he is sorry for his fault and anxious for pardon. I pray, therefore, that what you praise in me you show in yourself together with me. Insofar as you suffer with me in your righteous heart over his affliction, forgive Osbern if he sinned against you in anything for the sake of your kindness and our charity, just as you pardoned Salvius because of your goodness alone.²⁶⁴

Purpose and intention is once more important in the assessment of punishment. It is something of a mitigating factor that the monk in question is considered to have committed his failing due to ignorance as opposed to intent to cause harm although, as Anselm has admitted elsewhere in his letter collection, it can be remarkably difficult to determine whether or not an individual intends harm.

Anselm's letter to Fulk, Abbot of Saint Pierre-sur-Dive (c1085), provides a glimpse at the way in which Anselm intended mercy and joy to play a role in repentance. Mercy was critical for a harmonious lifestyle and it was equally important for individuals to forgive as to feel forgiven. The return from sin was something to be rejoiced. There are two critical elements to the request for forgiveness that Anselm presents; the first is that the monk is penitent, and the second is the use of religious authorities to prop up Anselm's suggestions.

²⁶⁴Anselm, Ep. 58 In eisdem litteris cuiusdam culpae veniam spontanea benignitate eidem dilecto vestro et meo concessam inveni; et quia servulus vester, frater noster OSBERNUS, cum eo pariter se non per superbiam, sed per imprudentiam peccasse cognoscit, nec sibi sentit indultum esse: maestum eum pro culpa et sollicitum de venia percepi. Precor igitur ut quod in me laudatis, me cum in vobis exhibeatis. Quatenus me cum super afflictionem eius pia gestantes viscera, sicut SALWIO indulgistis propter vestram solam bonitatem, ita OSBERNO dimittatis, si quid in vos peccavit, propter vestram benignitatem et nostram caritatem.

Not only has he admitted fault, but he has agreed to accept any and all punishments proffered:

YOUR SON, WHO LEFT your paternity without permission, penitent and prepared to give full satisfaction according to your judgement, is humbly returning. He does not ask you to remit the punishment he deserves but rather, in your mercy, to take him back, even as the last, into the fold deserted through his own fault. I beseech our other brothers and fellow-monks, your sons, that they, imploring the mercy of your paternity for him, show that they are glad that their brother was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found.²⁶⁵ Indeed you should show your judgement and mercy to that brother by the measure – as it is written, I shall sing of mercy and judgement to you, O Lord²⁶⁶ - that the power and the prudence are yours to the extent that mercy may surpass judgement.²⁶⁷

This penitence on behalf of the monk is, rather than a time for recrimination from all around him, a time for joy that he has been saved from permanently breaking his oath. Although it is right and proper that the Abbott punish him for his flight, the other monks must be encouraged to welcome him back into the fold.

A similar example can be found in Anselm's letter to Ulfric, Philip and William, Monks of Canterbury, written in August 1104. Anselm begins in a less than accusatory fashion. Rather than the monks deciding to leave of their own volition, they were persuaded by the Devil. Although this angers Anselm, he once more brings forth the consolation of return, stating that it is still possible for the monks to recover what they have lost:

²⁶⁵ Lk 15:32.

²⁶⁶ Ps 100:1.

²⁶⁷ Anselm, Ep. 105 Filius vester, qui a paternitate vestra inordinate abierat, paenitens et ad omnem satisfactionem secundum vestrum iudicium paratus humiliter redit. Qui non tam postulat, ut illi poenam quam meruit remittatis, quam ut vel ultimum illum intra gregem, quem sua culpa dimiserat, vestra misericordia constituatis. Precor igitur ego sanctitatem vestram, ut non tam consideret districtio vestra quod ille fecit peccando, quam penset pietas vestra quod facit humiliter paenitendo. Precor etiam fratres et dominos nostros, alios filios vestros, ut paternitatis vestrae misericordiam pro eo exorantes gaudium se monstrent habere, quia frater eorum 'mortuus fuerat et revixit, perierat et inventus est'. Qua vero mensura erga eundem fratrem iudicium sive misericordiam vestram ostendere debeatis - sicut scriptum est: "misericordiam et iudicium cantabo tibi, domine" -: vestrae potestatis est et vestrae prudentiae; tantum ut superexaltet misericordia iudicio.

I HAVE HEARD that through the persuasion of the ancient serpent²⁶⁸ whose cunning drove our first parents out of paradise, you have in your turn abandoned the paradise of the cloister and the religious way of life, and for this I am deeply grieved. But I was consoled and gladdened because God did not shut the gate of paradise to you so that you could not enter it later but rather mercifully forced you to return to the peace which you had left behind. If you give him thanks for this mercy which he showed you against your will, and if you promise improvement not only by word of mouth before men but also in your hearts in the face of God, then I shall give thanks to God with you and shall expel from my heart all the rancor which I conceived because of your guilt.²⁶⁹

The message is very much one of hope for the future after recompense has been paid for the sins of the past. It is illuminating in the following quotation to see Anselm referring to shame in terms of an indulgence of the individual. Repentance and the acceptance of appropriate punishment are given as the cost of their return, although Anselm warns them against indulging in negative emotions, in this case shame:

Therefore I admonish you as my sons to expel completely from your hearts, by doing penance before God, those vicious and diabolic desires which you had, and not bewilder your minds indiscriminately by indulging in any shame after God has called you back to himself. But putting your trust in the fact that God receives repentant sinners kindly, you should be at peace in your good intentions and in the love of your order.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁸ See Rev 12:9.

²⁶⁹ Anselm, Ep. 333 *Audivi quia persuasione serpentis antiqui, cuius astutia primos parentes nostros de paradiso eiecit, claustrale paradisum et religiosam conversationem, quantum ad vos, deseruistis, et valde dolui; sed consolatus sum et laetificatus quia non clausit deus vobis ostium paradisi, ne ultra in illud intraretis, sed potius vos misericorditer coegit, ut ad requiem relictam rediretis. Si autem pro hac misericordia, quam vobis invitis fecit, gratias illi agitis, et non tantum coram hominibus ore, sed etiam coram deo corde correctionem promittitis: agam vobis cum gratias deo, et omnem rancorem quem de culpa vestra concepi, expellam de corde meo.*

²⁷⁰ Anselm, Ep. 333 *Moneo igitur vos ut filios meos, quatenus illam pravam et diabolicam voluntatem quam habuistis, paenitendo coram deo de corde vestro penitus expellatis, neque occasione alicuius verecundiae, postquam vos deus ad se revocavit, mentem vestram indiscrete confundatis; sed sperantes in hoc quia deus paenitentes benigne suscipit, in bona voluntate et in amore vestri ordinis quiescatis.*

Anselm makes it clear in the final portion of the letter that it is God who has thwarted the Devil and who has saved them from his plans. He follows this by warning them once more about bearing shame appropriately, clearly an important aspect of monastic repentance for Anselm:

For it sometimes comes to pass that the devil cannot complete what he has started because God has mercy on his servant and defends him, and so he turns to another ruse: the man whom he could not bring to a fall as he had intended may now fall through his unwillingness to bear excessive shame. Only in the sight of God be amazed that you could have wished this and be ashamed, but before men take comfort in your good conscience and be confident. By your good way of life show that all wicked desires are foreign to you and thus you will bring it about that nobody remembers what you did and there will be no wicked suspicion about you. May almighty God absolve you from all past sins and protect you in future from every sin for ever.²⁷¹

This final example has illustrated many of the themes previously discussed in this chapter. The paradise of the cloister can be returned to, but only through repentance, an acceptance of punishment, and ultimately forgiving and feeling forgiven. Obedience remains a key aspect of Anselm's ethical position and works as an effective component of virtue ethics, as obedience is a virtue and shows humility, but also can only be effectively measured by the intent of the individual. Shame must be born and dispensed with, as a failure to progress from a standpoint of shame can be just as dangerous as maintaining a sinful position and refusing to progress back into the ethical community.

Obedience, then, provides a key example in the study of Anselm's normative philosophy. It embodies the theological aspects of submitting the will to the divine and the earthly counter-

²⁷¹Anselm, Ep. 333 *Solet enim contingere ut, quoniam diabolus, deo miserante et servum suum defendente, non potest de eo quod incepit perficere, ad aliam se convertat astutiam, et quem sicut incepit deicere nequit, deiciat per immoderatae verecundiae impatientiam. Coram deo tantum admiramini quomodo hoc velle potuistis et erubescite, et coram hominibus ex bona conscientia confortamini et confidite. Per bonam conversationem ostendite omnem pravam voluntatem alienam esse a vobis, et sic facietis ut nulla memoria sit aliis de hoc quod fecistis, et nulla prava suspicio de vobis. Omnipotens deus vos et a praeteritis culpis absolvat et in futuro sine fine ab omni peccato custodiat.*

part of submission to superiors. Anselm's letters on repentance, punishment, and forgiveness provide tantalising glimpses of how Anselm felt individuals who behaved poorly and, in the case of his letter collection especially, were disobedient ought to be treated. Unfortunately a complete account is never given, yet what is provided fits coherently within the boundaries established by his ethical philosophy.

Anselm, Kings, and Princes

Although Anselm never wrote a systematic treatise on the role of the king or prince, the letters he wrote to kings and noblemen provide an excellent picture of what he felt their roles entailed and why. These provide the best glimpses of what political beliefs Anselm may have held and the manner in which he chose to articulate those views. His strategic use of language, and his combination of ethical and theological themes, exemplifies his coherent normative philosophy within the sphere of political thought. The pathway from the temporal to the eternal remains a constant theme throughout these correspondences and will not be addressed separately in this chapter. This chapter, which will focus on the five areas that occur with the greatest regularity, will seek to establish the extent to which Anselm's political philosophy can be determined. In so doing the following elements will be examined: that the king was placed in power by God, that the king must be virtuous, indeed, more so than those who do not receive such favour, that the king must maintain the peace and dispense justice, and that the king has a very real and pivotal role to play in acting as an advocate for the church. The chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of the manner in which monastic governance was expected to occur and a number of similarities in Anselm's thought between secular and monastic governance. By so doing, the consistency of Anselm's thought can be shown and the extent of his normative philosophy can be realised.

Anselm's letters to secular authorities bear several features which make them subtly different in analysis to those examined in previous chapters. There is a revealing moment in a letter to King Muirchertach of Ireland in which Anselm questions the literacy of the King and court.²⁷² Most likely he is referring to their familiarity with Latin, but it is worth noting that many of Anselm's more complex philosophical ideas are represented throughout his letters to the aristocracy in simple terms and focused more heavily upon biblical quotations as opposed to rigorous abstract debate. It is most likely that this was a pragmatic shift calculated to accommodate those without a formal or monastic education, but it does require, at times, a broader interpretation of the language than would otherwise be necessary. In order to mitigate these features, this chapter will at times be forced to employ

²⁷² See Anselm, Ep. 435.

longer quotations and repeated examples in order to establish arguments with a stronger degree of certainty.

Anselm adhered to the prevailing eleventh and twelfth century belief that kings were granted their position by the grace of God, but, as it has implications upon their ethical and political behaviour, it is worth establishing firmly how and why he was so adamant in reminding them of their resultant debt. Such sentiments were by no means unique to Anselm at the time. In a letter of the 15th of April, 1102 from Pope Paschal to King Henry I, we see a similar reminder.²⁷³

There are two main sources in Anselm's letters for evidence of why a king should be a king. The first is in salutation formulas, which can be seen as a precursor to the main arguments that Anselm would wish to make in any given letter and a reminder to the king of a power greater than their own. A standard example being Anselm's salutation to Muirchertach, King of Ireland in 1106/1107, 'TO MUIRCHERTACH, BY THE GRACE OF GOD GLORIOUS KING OF IRELAND.'²⁷⁴ Anselm is not always consistent, and, in his next letter to Muirchertach, Anselm neglects to mention God's Grace, instead simply calling him, 'MUIRCHERTACH, GLORIOUS KING OF IRELAND.'²⁷⁵ The letter is far more condemnatory, and it is quite possible that he neglected to do so in order to show his displeasure.

The second category, which is more interesting for the purposes of this chapter, occurs in the body of the letters themselves, and in this context it is to be noted that Anselm does, in the second letter, remind Muirchertach of the fact in no uncertain terms. The majority of these references provide a direct reminder of ethical obligation, or duty, that situates the initial statement within the purview of Anselm's ethical philosophy. The obligation as phrased is a reference to Hebrews, adding sacred authority to Anselm's argument:

²⁷³ See Anselm, Ep. 224.

²⁷⁴ Anselm, Ep. 427 Further examples include: Ep. 235, Ep. 319, Ep. 324, Ep. 413.

²⁷⁵ Ep. 435.

For this purpose indeed God has put you in a place of royal sublimity so that you may govern your subject people with the sceptre of equity²⁷⁶ and with that sceptre strike and remove whatever is against righteousness in them.²⁷⁷

By placing the statement within the main body of the letter, Anselm makes it clear that rather than simply representing a convention of address, the debt which kings owe God for their position and their power is a central component of how kings ought to be viewed. In doing so, he makes clear that God, who is eternal, has given Muirchertach, who is not, the kingship with a particular temporal purpose in mind. Anselm provides further examples in his letters to Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, this time focusing on the aid which a monarch was able, and therefore obligated to give as will be discussed shortly, to the church.

BLESSED BE GOD IN HIS GIFTS and holy in all his works, who, by His grace, raised you to the dignity of king in that country in which our Lord Jesus Christ himself, having sown the beginnings of Christianity, has planted his Church anew so that it might spread from there throughout the whole world.²⁷⁸

In a later correspondence with Baldwin, Anselm illustrates the same point while providing a more direct link with his ethical philosophy, showing, as will be discussed in the next section, that the gift of kingship comes with responsibility.

May your Highness consider therefore, how eminent is God's grace that wishes you to be king in this city, and with what desire and zeal the king whom God has placed there should devote himself to the will and service of God.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁶ Heb 1:8.

²⁷⁷ Anselm, Ep. 435 Ad hoc enim deus in regali sublimitate vos constituit, ut 'virga aequitatis' subditos populos gubernetis, et quicquid in eis iustitiae adversatur, eadem virga percutiatis et amoveatis.

²⁷⁸ Anselm, Ep. 235 Benedictus deus in donis suis et 'sanctus in omnibus operibus suis', qui vos ad regis dignitatem sua gratia in illa terra exaltavit, in qua ipse dominus noster IESUS Christus, per se ipsum principium Christianitatis seminans, ecclesiam suam, ut inde per totum orbem propagaretur, novam plantavit...

²⁷⁹ Anselm, Ep. 324 Consideret igitur vestra celsitudo quam eminens gratia dei sit, quod vos in hac civitate regem esse voluit; et quanto affectu, quanto studio se debeat subdere voluntati dei et eius servitio rex, quem ille ibi constituit.

By establishing and repeatedly informing kings that they owed their position to God's grace, Anselm was seeking to show them that they owed God recompense for his kindness and their subsequent good fortune. Ultimately the argument is one that supports church authority. God may have given kings temporal power, but as they only held their places by the grace of God the authority upon which it was cemented was that of the church. As such, the church maintained a level of ethical authority in commenting upon secular decisions and the behaviour of kings and princes. This is, perhaps, the most concrete example of the tension between the temporal and the eternal that runs through the majority of Anselm's writings and will be a recurrent theme throughout this chapter.

It is a remarkable facet of Anselm's normative philosophy that it is, for the most part, universalisable to a great extent. Ethical obligations expressed in the abstract are also presented in the pragmatic and Anselm's treatment of kings is no different. Anselm's letters make it quite clear that kings are to be held ethically responsible for their actions and their kingdoms in a manner that not only equals others in society, but exceeds them. This is not specifically by dint of their kingship, but rather, because they are in possession of the greatest capacity for good action and ensuring that others are capable and able to perform good actions.

Anselm makes this point most clearly in a letter to Muirchertach. He begins by invoking two methods of persuasion that he frequently uses when addressing kings, those of self-interest and a direct link between their earthly behaviour and its eternal results.

For this reason I beseech the constancy of your good will to consider whether there are any things in your kingdom which have to be corrected for the sake of eternal life and you should earnestly strive, with God's help, to amend them so that the grace of God may increase more and more within you. For nothing which can be corrected should be neglected. God exacts from everyone not only what they do wrong but also wrongs they fail to correct which they can correct. And the more power they have to correct, the more strictly God demands of them that in proportion to the power mercifully granted to them they should will and do what is right. This seems above all to apply to kings since they are known to possess greater power and to suffer less opposition among men. If however, you cannot do everything at once,

you should not for that reason give up trying to progress from better things to even better ones; for God usually perfects good intentions and good efforts with kindness and repays them with abundance.²⁸⁰

Not only do kings possess the ethical responsibility of a normal individual, but because they have the power to affect change and can therefore enable more of their subjects to live ethically good lives, they are burdened with additional responsibilities. Anselm takes care to stipulate that this is proportional to their power and it can easily be extrapolated that he would not have expected sweeping changes from a king beset on all sides by others contesting his authority. At the end of this sequence he returns to a common ethical framework that fits his political statement with his ethical philosophy. Most notable are his references to the progress and teleology that he hopes the king will follow and his exhortation to good intention, which hearkens directly back to his ethics of intent.²⁸¹ The key for kings is to provide the good intention and impetus for change. They may fail to achieve it for any number of reasons, but the ethically unforgiveable act would be not to try.

He reiterates these points in his second letter from a similar time.

I therefore beseech, exhort and admonish your excellency to take pains to have these evils in your kingdom corrected so that the rewards which you are seeking from God for other good deeds may be increased for you by these. Finally, if you should find in yourself or in those whom you have undertaken to govern anything contrary to

²⁸⁰ Anselm, Ep. 427 *Precor itaque bonae voluntatis vestrae constantiam, quatenus consideret, si qua sunt in regno vestro corrigenda, propter vitae aeternae praemium et ut magis ac magis in vobis gratia dei augeatur, sollicite deo adiuvante studeatis emendare. Nihil enim est contemnendum quod corrigi possit. Et deus exigit ab omnibus non solum quod male agunt, sed etiam quod non corrigunt mala, quae corrigere possunt. Et quanto potentiores sunt ut corrigant, tanto districtius exigit ab illis deus, ut secundum potestatem misericorditer impensam bene velint et faciant. Quod maxime videtur ad reges pertinere, quoniam ipsi cognoscuntur maiorem potestatem et cui minus contradicitur inter homines obtinere. Si autem non omnia simul potestis, non debetis propter hoc quin a melioribus ad meliora studeatis proficere; quia bona proposita et bonos conatus deus solet benigne perficere et beata plenitudine retribuere.*

²⁸¹ See Chapters 1 and 2 for further discussion of Anselm's conception of teleology and ethics of intent.

the will of God, strive diligently to amend it so that when you pass from the earthly kingdom you may come to the heavenly one.²⁸²

The role of governing and of secular justice is given prominence and once more the language is ethical in nature. The role of the king increasingly appears to be dedicated to removing barriers to the ethical perfection of their subjects, leaving open the pathway from the temporal to the eternal and encouraging all individuals within the kingdom to navigate it appropriately. In the final part of the letter, Anselm posits a clear parity between the conduct of the governor and the governed, showing that a clear responsibility lies with the former for both. The king has a role beyond the simple limitation of sin. Rather he can have, and indeed is expected to have a positive influence upon the individuals and society he is ruling. The responsibility for a ethical kingdom is therefore divided between the *regnum* and *sacerdotium* with elements resting upon both parties.

The implications on Anselm's relationship with William Rufus are clear. Not only did the King have all of the appropriate power to enact Gregorian Reforms, he possessed an unparalleled level of authority with Papal and Archiepiscopal individuals informing him that he ought to enact such changes. A similar point can be extended to explain Anselm's feeling of betrayal when Henry I failed to enact reforms. From Anselm's perspective, Henry had not only the power to enact such changes, but the ethical obligation as well.

Anselm makes a similar point to Alexander, King of the Scots in February or March 1107, although using more characteristically Anselmian ethical language. The comparison to the will of God to be found in this passage is particularly reminiscent of the language Anselm uses to discuss the good life, intent, and virtue:

For kings reign well when they live according to the will of God and serve him in fear, and when they reign over themselves and do not succumb to vices but overcome their persistence by constant fortitude. For constancy in virtues and royal

²⁸²Anselm, Ep. 435 Precor itaque, hortor et moneo, quatenus excellentia vestra operam det, ut ista in regno suo corrigantur, quatenus merces, quam a deo pro aliis bonis expetitis, pro istis vobis augeatur. Ceterum, si quid in vobis aut in his quos regere suscepistis, quod ullatenus voluntati dei adversari queat, perpenderitis, sollicite emendare satagite ut, cum de terreno regno transieritis, ad caeleste regnum veniatis.

fortitude are not incompatible in a king. Certain kings, like David, lived a holy life and ruled the people entrusted to them with the severity of justice and the gentleness of loving-kindness, as the matter demanded. Show yourself in such a way that the wicked fear you and the good love you. In order that your life may always be pleasing to God, your mind should always remember the punishment of the wicked and the reward of the good after this life. May almighty God entrust you and all your actions to nothing else but his own holy providence.²⁸³

This letter represents one of Anselm's clearest mentions of virtue and vice within the context of governance. It provides a direct statement that kings can be successful ethically and provides a link between effective governance and the teleology set forth in previous chapters. The purpose of a king is much the same as the purpose of a peasant, to live a good life in accordance with the anthropology set forth by Anselm elsewhere and by doing so achieve eternal salvation. The biblical underpinning, through arguments based on King David, effectively reiterates Church authority and provides an effective example of a good king. As such, the maintenance of government is for the ethical furtherance of all involved and a partnership with the church is to be expected to meet those aims. Justice is given pride of place, although tempered with loving-kindness, in a similar manner to many of Anselm's explicitly ethical letters.

Anselm's letters to Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, provide further illustration of this point. The common theme of the self-benefit of good ethical action is overt:

For only if you reign according to the will of God will you truly reign for your own benefit... I pray to almighty God that he himself may persuade you to do what I

²⁸³Anselm, Ep. 413 Tunc enim bene reges regnant, cum secundum voluntatem dei vivunt et serviunt ei in timore, et cum super se ipsos regnant nec se vitiis subiciunt, sed illorum importunitatem constanti fortitudine superant. Non enim repugnant in rege virtutum constantia et fortitudo regia. Quidam enim reges, sicut DAVID, et sancte vixerunt et populum sibi commissum cum rigore iustitiae et pietatis mansuetudine, secundum quod res exegit, rexerunt. Sic vos exhibete, ut mali vos timeant et boni vos diligant. Et ut vita vestra semper deo placeat, semper mens vestra vindictam malorum et praemium bonorum post hanc vitam memoria retineat. Omnipotens deus vos et omnes actus vestros nulli alii quam suae piae dispositioni committat.

wish to persuade you to do, so that he may lead you in the path of his commandments²⁸⁴ and guide you to the glory of the heavenly kingdom.²⁸⁵

Anselm links scriptural authority to a teleological point in order to establish that the advice he gives is based on the wishes of the divine. An additional example can be found in Anselm's letter to the same recipient in 1104 or 1105:

ALTHOUGH BY THE GIFT OF GOD you have the knowledge which, with God's help, should be enough to enable you to live a good life, and although I know that your intention is good, yet the abundance of love which I feel for you induces me to write something to your Highness from such a distance. For just as a burning fire is fanned into greater flame by the wind, so goodwill is aroused by friendly admonition to burn more fervently.²⁸⁶

God has given Baldwin all that he needs to effectively rule as an ethically good individual and, much as the man seeking to be ethical must maintain uprightness of will, so too must the ruler. The language of ethics used for the ruler is the same as would be used in writing to any monk. Intention and leading a good life are, as usual, emphasised. The simile Anselm provides at the end of the passage is one he uses repeatedly throughout his letter collection and can be seen as inspirational for others in addition to its primary use as an excuse for what they may perceive as criticism on Anselm's part. Specifically in this instance it may be assumed that Anselm is seeking to teach the King of a manner in which he may have a positive influence on others. By being ethically good himself he sets a standard that others may be inspired or expected to adhere to.

Yet, Anselm provides stronger encouragement for good ethical action in other letters such as one written to Henry I, in the spring of 1104, while at Lyon. This letter shows scriptural

²⁸⁴ See Ps 118:35.

²⁸⁵ Anselm, Ep. 235 Tunc enim vere regnatis ad vestram utilitatem, si regnatis secundum dei voluntatem... Quod autem ego vobis persuadere desidero, oro deum omnipotentem, ut ipse persuadeat, et sic vos in via mandatorum suorum deducat, ut ad gloriam regni caelestis perducatur.

²⁸⁶ Anselm, Ep. 324 Quamvis dei dono scientiam habeatis, quae vobis ad bene vivendum adiuvante deo possit sufficere, et licet sciam in vobis bonam esse voluntatem: tamen cogit me abundantia dilectionis quam erga vos habeo, ut de tam longe aliquid scribam vestrae celsitudini. Sicut enim ignis ardens vento magis accenditur, ita bona voluntas amica monitione ut plus ferveat excitatur.

authority used in an abnormal fashion. Anselm is clearly threatening Henry to change his stance upon the freedom of the church, but by casting aside his own authority as an archbishop and instead relying solely upon scriptural authority to make his point he is able to claim that he wishes such tragedies would not occur.

For it is not I but Holy Scripture that says: The mighty will suffer mightier torments²⁸⁷ and: The stronger pains threaten the more powerful,²⁸⁸ may God avert this from you!²⁸⁹

As an added inducement, the very fact that kings have been so favoured by their temporal placement and power gives them an added responsibility to behave in an ethically good way. God punishes opportunities for good ethical actions that are squandered by a man, but in kings, whose temporal power grants them the opportunity to behave in a positive fashion that effects entire kingdoms, God punishes as though they have harmed the entire kingdoms that they could have helped.

The question is then raised of how kings ought to behave in order to avoid such punishment and maintain the blessing and responsibility of God's grace. Anselm's letter to Robert, Count of Flanders, written in December 1094 or early 1095, provides what will be the first of several examples to urge peace as a foundation of ethical action and as a necessary precursor for an ethically viable state and king. In addition, a strong appeal to the promotion of earthly justice as a means of attaining an eternity in heaven is provided. The self-interested prince is advised to be an ethical prince, for that is the only manner in which damnation may be avoided. This is reminiscent of Anselm's discussion of peace as a virtue and provides a further example of the coherence of his thought. Once more Anselm contrasts his own humility with the truth that is scriptural authority:

Therefore my humility suggests to your Highness, not chiding you but inviting you to advance from good to better, to consider seriously what holy authority

²⁸⁷ Wi 6:7.

²⁸⁸ Wi 6:9.

²⁸⁹ Anselm, Ep. 319 Dicit enim sacra scriptura, non ego: "Potentes potenter tormenta patientur"; et: "fortioribus fortior instat cruciatus"; quod deus a vobis avertat!

commands: Love justice, you who are judges on earth.²⁹⁰ For the more the power of those to whom the earth is entrusted to be ruled asserts itself, the more they throw it into confusion and burden it with their violence if they deviate from justice and do not guide or help the human race. In any case this terrible threat is aimed at such people: For the great will suffer greater torments²⁹¹ and stronger torture await the stronger.²⁹² Therefore may your prudence always observe justice in your doings, and sweeten it by your mercy in any offenses inflicted on you. For justice demands also that whoever wants mercy for himself must grant mercy to others. I have briefly pointed out what my heart keenly desires, but I beg almighty God so to grant you to govern the earthly realm that he may reward you with the heavenly kingdom in the life to come.²⁹³

As is not uncommon, Anselm phrases these ethical suggestions in purely self-interested terms. The king must be just and merciful for the sake of the state, but more importantly for his own soul. This incorporates an additional theme that will be investigated in greater depth later, that violence is the enemy of the *regnum* in which ethically good actions cannot thrive and that peace is a necessary precursor to a stable and ethically justified society. This letter is also important in serving as a form of threat. Anselm was aware that in order to advance his, and the church's, interests, he would be forced to convince a number of individuals at court. As a result, threats that incorporated not only eternal damnation, but also temporal repercussions for those who angered God, or went against his will, were necessary as a rhetorical aid to convince those wielding temporal power.

²⁹⁰ Ws 1:2.

²⁹¹ Ws 6:7.

²⁹² Ws 6:9.

²⁹³ Anselm, Ep. 180 Suggestit igitur vestrae sublimitati, non corripiendo sed de bonis ad meliora invitando, mea humilitas, ut assidue cogitet illud quod sacra iubet auctoritas: 'Diligite iustitiam, qui iudicatis terram'. Quanto enim illorum, quibus terra commissa est ad regendum, praeeminet potentia, tanto magis, si a iustitia deviant, non regunt nec adiuvant humanum genus, sed perturbant et gravant sua violentia. Talibus utique terribilis illa comminatio intenditur: 'Potentes potenter tormenta patientur'; et: 'fortioribus fortior instat cruciatus'. Semper igitur in actibus suis servet iustitiam vestra prudentia, et in offensionibus quae sibi fiunt, indulcet eam sua misericordia. Nam et hoc iustitia imperat, ut qui sibi vult misereri, misericordiam aliis impendat. Breviter monui quod cor meum assidue desiderat, sed omnipotentem deum precor, ut sic ipse vobis terrenum principatum gubernare tribuat, quatenus in futura vita regnum caeleste vobis retribuat.

An overt threat is made in Anselm's letter to Count Robert of Meulan, the Henry I's chief counsellor, written in September or October of 1105. From a political standpoint, it provides a rare acknowledgment, from Anselm, of the role of secular princes and the decision making process of the king within a broader court.

For this reason I tell you that I fear greatly that the King might provoke the wrath of God against himself and against those by whose advice he puts off fulfilling such a necessary and reasonable matter, which it is his duty to do and which he can do without losing anything of what belongs to the royal power according to the will of God. As friend and as archbishop, whatever sort of person I may be, I advise the King and those about him not to strive to satisfy their own will more than the will of God because God may one day satisfy his will against the will of those who act in this way. Give him counsel therefore and take counsel for yourselves before God shows his wrath, which up to now he has held back while waiting for you to bow to his will.²⁹⁴

When Anselm writes to kings informing them to follow God's will he is presenting them with the very definition that he later provides for both the paradise of the cloister and the paradise of heaven. Although Anselm would never have claimed that a literal parity was possible, he is exhorting them to try to make their kingdoms as similar to the commonly accepted view of heaven as they were able. A kingdom in which the ruler and the subjects all solely focused on loving God and ensuring that God's will was followed by all would be as close to a temporal paradise, from Anselm's perspective, as man could ever achieve.

It becomes clear, over the course of Anselm's correspondence, that he considers it the role of kings to maintain peace, not only within their kingdoms, but between kingdoms as well. Anselm's stance on peace and violence has already been exemplified in the chapter on virtue ethics, but the following two examples provide direct links between the role of the King

²⁹⁴Anselm, Ep. 369 Quapropter dico vobis quia valde timeo, ne ipse super se provocet iram dei et super eos, quorum consilio differt tam necessariae rei, tam rationabili succurrere, cum ad illum hoc pertineat et facere possit, ut nihil perdat de iis quae secundum deum ad regiam pertinent potestatem. Sicut amicus et sicut archiepiscopus - qualiscumque sim - consulo illi et iis qui circa illum sunt, ut non plus studeant satisfacere voluntati suae quam voluntati dei, quia deus aliquando satisfaciet voluntati suae contra voluntatem illorum, qui hoc faciunt. Consulite ergo illi et vobis, priusquam deus ostendat iram suam, quam adhuc suspendit, exspectans ut humiliemini ad voluntatem suam.

within society and the benefits of a peaceful kingdom. The views expressed by Anselm in the following letters mirror strongly his views on peace as expressed elsewhere.

In his letter of 1102 or 1103, to Humbert, Count and Marquess, Anselm provides a brief formulation of this principle in the form of praise:

This love grew greatly when I learned about your life and uprightness through many people, because you made use of the power of your sovereignty with kindness to maintain peace and justice.²⁹⁵

This degree of praise is rare from Anselm. Critically he links the peace of his territory to both uprightness [sic uprightness-of-will] and the effective use of temporal power to achieve good ethical ends. Once more peace is linked to a large number of people and the appreciation they feel for it. Anselm's use of love in this context is significant. As was described in the earlier chapter on Anselm's philosophical works, a fundamental facet of man is to love that which is good, despise what is not, and discern effectively between the two. Therefore Anselm's expression of growing love is indicative of an increase in his approval of Humbert's ethical actions.

Returning to Muirchertach, Anselm's letter of 1106 or 1107 provides an assurance that his works towards peace are appreciated by his subjects. Much as has been seen elsewhere in this chapter, Anselm phrases peace in the context of the self-interest of the king himself.

I GIVE THANKS TO GOD for the many good things which I hear about your Highness. Among these is the fact that you let the people of your kingdom live in such peace that all good men who hear this give thanks to God and desire a long life for you. For where there is peace it is possible for all men of good will to accomplish what they choose without being disturbed by evil men. Therefore, your Highness, through whom God does this, can most certainly look forward to a great reward

²⁹⁵Anselm, Ep. 262 VII Qui amor multum crevit cognita per multos vestra vita et probitate, quia ad servandam pacem ac iustitiam cum pietate utimini vestri principatus potestate.

from him. Upon this foundation of peace it is easy to build the other things which the religion of the Church demands.²⁹⁶

Anselm's statement that peace is the foundation of a good society provides an important insight into his views on the state and government. Certainly it is consistent with his views on ethics, but moreover it provides the situational requirements for individuals to themselves act upon their ethical impulses. In addition, it is similar language to that in which he often praises the monastic lifestyle. A primary benefit of spending time in a monastery is the peace in which one may pursue God and thus, for Anselm, the king spreading peace is the king that is allowing a monastic atmosphere in a secular environment. This is by no means an isolated example of such a principle.

Peace then is a necessary component of the good state and an important part of the king's role. The king's ability to ensure peace is directly linked to the ability of the populace to attain ethical goods whereas war and violence create the opposite effect, tarnishing all with whom they come into contact.

An important aspect of the peaceful society was agreement between the two major power structures in medieval Europe, the church and secular authorities. This broader issue can be said to be the major conflict that pervaded medieval politics and, as was mentioned during the introduction, allows Anselm to be viewed in the broader context of the Gregorian Reforms. Although Anselm does not delve into specifically political arguments, he makes his position clear as to how a good prince ought to behave towards the church and how the very definition of a bad prince can be framed by opposing behaviour. Although Anselm reiterated these themes on numerous occasions, they can be best displayed through six letters, two explaining the role of the good prince and four warning against the dangers of the bad.

²⁹⁶Anselm, Ep. 427 Gratias ago deo de bonis multis, quae de vestra celsitudine audio. Inter quae est hoc quia gentem regni vestri in tanta pace facitis vivere, ut omnes boni, qui hoc audiunt, deo agant gratias et vitae vestrae diuturnitatem desiderent. Ubi enim pax est, licet omnibus bonam voluntatem habentibus quod optant sine perturbatione malorum hominum efficere. Unde vestra celsitudo, per quam hoc deus facit, potest ab eo certissime magnam retributionem expectare. Super hoc utique pacis fundamentum facile est alia quae ecclesiastica religio exigit, aedificare.

A key example of Anselm's letters about the investiture controversy, and fitting into the broader category of letters relating to Gregorian Reform, was written to Clementia Countess of Flanders in Autumn 1102. It provides Anselm's clearest exposition upon the subject of how kings (the term used is princes, which was a generic term applied to rulers of the period for the sake of intellectual discourse) ought to behave in relation to the church. The church is framed as the mother of princes, a position to be obeyed and supported. In addition, many of the common themes used by Anselm to express how a king ought to behave towards their subjects and as an individual, once more appear.

I HAVE BEEN TOLD that certain abbots have so been established in Flanders that the Count, your husband, did not give them investiture by his hand. As this was not done without his prudent clemency so I am certain that it was not done without your clement prudence. The more I rejoice about this good deed of yours, the more truly do I love you both in God. When you carry out what pertains to the Christian religion in complete agreement you show yourselves to be true children and faithful advocates of the Church, the spouse of God. For princes, if they are Christians, should not consider that the spouse of God, their mother, was given to them as a hereditary dominion but rather entrusted to them by God so that they may merit to become her coheirs to honor and defend her. There was a king who understood what pertains to princes; he cursed the princes who wanted to possess God's sanctuary by inheritance thus: My God, send them whirling this way and that, like chaff before the wind,²⁹⁷ and what follows next. It is not David who says this but the Spirit of God, the Son of David, who said: Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁷ Ps 82:12, 14.

²⁹⁸ Mk 13:31; Anselm, Ep. 249 Relatum mihi est quosdam abbates in Flandria sic constitutos, ut comes, vir vester, nullam eis manu sua daret investituram. Quod sicut non sine eius prudenti clementia, ita non esse aestimo factum absque vestra clementi prudentia. Tanto ergo de hoc vestro bono opere gaudeo, quanto vos ambos verius in deo diligo. Cum enim ea quae religionis Christianae sunt, concordi voluntate facitis, veros vos esse filios ecclesiae, sponsae dei, et fideles advocatos ostenditis. Non enim debent principes sponsam dei, matrem suam, si Christiani sunt, aestimare sibi datam in haereditariam dominationem, sed a deo sibi commendatam, ut eius cohaeredes mereantur esse ad reverentiam et defensionem. Rex enim erat et quid ad principes pertineat intelligebat, qui principes volentes haereditate "sanctuarium dei" possidere sic maledicebat: "Deus meus, pone illos ut rotam et

The key facet of this letter is its direct contrast between the temporal and the eternal. The characterisation is very much one of the church as the representation of the eternal within the temporal and the princes that wish to control her as in danger of being smitten. Once more it is possible to see the manner in which Anselm's thought is connected. The church is God's 'sanctuary' on Earth and any prince who wishes to control that sanctuary is doing so against the will of God. In the most literal sense they are usurping a will greater than their own and are therefore the very definition of behaving in an ethically bad fashion.

It is your duty, reverend lady and dearest daughter, to mention this and other similar things frequently to your husband in season or out of season,²⁹⁹ and advise him to prove that he is not lord of the Church, but her advocate, not her step-son but her true son. Then for sure his power will be pleasing to God, all his actions will be guided by him and God will be with him against all his enemies. Admonish him never to oppose God's law, for Scripture, which does not lie, states that those who are not subject to it are undoubtedly enemies of God.³⁰⁰ He should not trust in any counsel which is against God's counsel, for The Lord thwarts the counsel of princes, while the Lord's counsel stands firm for ever,³⁰¹ and, The wisdom of this world is folly with God.³⁰² Holy Scripture is the Lord's counsel and the counsel of those whom he said: He who hears you, hears me³⁰³ and was ordained for the good of Christian religion. Thus I beg that Countess Clementia should admonish and counsel her husband in this way so that divine clemency may raise both him and her to the kingdom of heaven.³⁰⁴

sicut stipulam ante faciem venti". Et quae proxime sequuntur. Non haec loquitur DAVID, sed spiritus dei, filii DAVID, qui dixit: "Caelum et terra transibunt, verba autem mea non transibunt".

²⁹⁹ 2 Tm 4:2.

³⁰⁰ See Rm 8:7-8.

³⁰¹ Ps 32:10-11.

³⁰² 1 Co 3:19.

³⁰³ Lk 10:16.

³⁰⁴ Anselm, Ep. 249 Ad vos pertinet, reverenda domina et filia carissima, ut haec et huiusmodi viro vestro frequenter 'opportune, importune' suggeratis, et ut non dominum sed advocatum, non privignum sed filium se probet esse ecclesiae consulatis. Certe sic erit potestas placens deo, et omnes actus eius dirigentur ab eo, et contra omnes adversarios eius erit cum eo. Monete eum, ut numquam adversetur legi dei, quia qui illi subditi non sunt, scriptura, quae non mentitur, asserit illos indubitanter inimicos esse dei. Ne credat consilium contra consilium dei, quia 'dominus' 'reprobat

This is, perhaps, the most stirring description provided by Anselm of the good prince working together with the church to provide a fitting society. In it he provides a positive vision for harmony between the *regnum* and *sacerdotium* and outlines most of his common themes on this score. Supporting the Church is framed as being in the best interest of the prince, as the church is somewhat responsible (through God) for the prince's position. God is deliberately set up as being not only wiser, but more powerful than, and capable of interfering with, the will of princes. For even the most self-interested prince, therefore, adhering to the policies and authority of the church is a necessity.

The next letter, to Robert Count of Flanders, shows a more historical side to Anselm, as he invokes Papal authority and legitimacy as a form of argumentation, although he uses it to establish much the same point. The scriptural authorities that he uses to back up the main thrust of the letter are those seeking to establish the position and authority of the Pope beyond doubt:

For this reason I give thanks to God whose grace guided your heart to do what pleases him, and I rejoice for you since you support without objection the ecclesiastical laws enacted to strengthen the Christian religion. By doing this you are obeying God, not men,³⁰⁵ and show yourself to be a true and faithful son of the Church of God and a true Christian. Moreover you reveal yourself as one of the sheep entrusted to blessed Peter the Apostle,³⁰⁶ to whom God gave the keys of the Kingdom of heaven.³⁰⁷ It is indeed certain that whoever does not obey the regulations of the Roman Pontiff, made for the protection of the Christian religion, is being disobedient to the apostle Peter whose vicar he is, nor does he belong to the flock which was entrusted to him by God. Let him seek, therefore other gates for the

consilia principum, consilium autem domini manet in aeternum'; et: 'sapientia huius saeculi stultitia est apud deum'. Consilium autem domini est sacra scriptura et eorum quibus dixit: 'qui vos audit, me audit' et ad Christianam religionem instituta. Haec moneat, haec consulat, rogo, viro suo comitissa CLEMENTIA, ut et illum et illam ad regnum caelorum sublevet divina clementia.

³⁰⁵ Ac 5:29.

³⁰⁶ See Jn 21:17.

³⁰⁷ Mt 16:19.

kingdom of heaven, because he will not enter through those whose keys the apostle Peter carries.³⁰⁸

Anselm begins with a threat of what might happen if the prince fails to act in an appropriate manner before progressing to flattery, praise, and a more characteristically ethical tone.

Accordingly, I rejoice and give you thanks, and pray that God may repay you, because you are giving a good example to other princes. In this way you induce all servants of God to pray for you, and you invoke God to love and assist you in all your dealings. I as a faithful companion of your soul, pray, beseech, encourage and advise you never consider the dignity of your highness diminished as long as you love and defend the liberty of God's spouse, your mother, the Church. You should not think yourself humbled if you raise her up, nor believe yourself weakened if you strengthen her. See, look around, there are examples at hand. Regard the princes who fight against her and tread her under foot – what good does it do them, what do they achieve? It is clear enough, there is no need to speak of it. Certainly those who glorify her will be glorified with her and in her.³⁰⁹

The insignificance of temporal ends is brought up as a reiteration of the theme that the purpose of the temporal is to prepare for the eternal. The will of God cannot be opposed as it is truth. The only authority upon which the will of God can be interpreted in the temporal

³⁰⁸Anselm, Ep. 248 Unde gratias ago deo, cuius gratia cor vestrum ad hoc quod sibi placet direxit, et gaudeo pro vobis quia ecclesiasticis institutis ad Christianae religionis profectum valentibus sine contradictione favetis. Cum enim hoc facitis, non homini sed deo oboeditis, et vos verum et fidelem filium ecclesiae dei et verum Christianum ostenditis, et vos esse de ovibus beato PETRO apostolo commendatis, cui deus claves dedit regni caelorum, monstratis. Certum quippe est quoniam, qui non oboedit Romani pontificis ordinationibus, quae fiunt propter Christianae religionis custodiam, inoboediens est apostolo PETRO, cuius vicarius est, nec est de grege illo, qui ei a deo commissus est. Quaerat igitur ille alias regni caelorum portas, quia per illas non intrabit, quarum claves PETRUS apostolus portat.

³⁰⁹Anselm, Ep. 248 Gaudens itaque gratias ago vobis, et oro ut deus retribuat vobis, quia bonum exemplum aliis principibus datis, et omnes servos dei hoc modo ut orent pro vobis invitatis, et deum ad amorem et auxilium vestrum in vestris negotiis invocatis. Precor, obsecro, moneo, consulo, ut fidelis animae vestrae, mi domine et in deo vere dilecte, ut numquam aestimetis vestrae celsitudinis minui dignitatem, si sponsae dei, matris vestrae ecclesiae amatis et defenditis libertatem; nec putetis vos humiliari, si eam exaltatis; nec credatis vos debilitari, si illam roboratis. Videte, circumspicite, exempla sunt in promptu; considerate principes qui illam impugnant et conculcant: ad quid proficiunt, ad quid deveniunt? Satis patet, non eget dictu. Certe qui illam glorificant, cum illa et in illa glorificabuntur.

sphere is that of the church. To oppose the church is, therefore, to oppose truth and the prince that does so is not only in the wrong ethically, but, in a very real sense, a fool who refuses to recognise truth. By adhering to such an authority, however, the prince is able to show himself to be all that is considered good in a man and therefore worthy of both temporal and eternal glory.

After two such positive visions of the church and state cooperating towards the salvation of man, it seems prudent to discuss Anselm's letters of warning against princes and kings who are either actively opposing the church, or who are in danger of doing so. These letters use much of the same imagery, although obviously in a more interrogatory fashion.

Anselm's letter to Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, sent in the spring of 1102, provides an insight into the organisation that must go into the establishment of a new kingdom and its relationship with what was, for all intents and purposes, a new church. Primacy is placed upon the freedom of the church in stronger language than in any other letter, with Anselm making the astounding claim that, for God, it is the thing he loves most. The characterization and dichotomy of kings as either bad or good and the negative phrasing seems to be intended as a reminder of the church's need for the support of king.

Do not think, as many bad kings do, that the Church of God has been given to you as if to a master whom it should serve, and not that it has been entrusted to you as its advocate and protector. God loves nothing more in this world than the freedom of his Church. Those who wish not so much to serve the Church but to dominate it prove without doubt that they are against God. God wishes his spouse to be free, not a slave.³¹⁰ Whoever treats and honors the Church as sons of their mother truly prove themselves to be her sons and sons of God, but those who dominate her as if she were a subject make themselves strangers not sons, and are therefore rightly disinherited of their inheritance and the dowry promised to them. In whatever way you establish the Church in your realm in this new revival, so future generations will receive and maintain her for a long time. I pray to almighty God that he himself may persuade you to do what I wish to persuade you to do, so that he may lead you

³¹⁰ See Gal 4:22 – 31.

in the path of his commandments³¹¹ and guide you to the glory of the heavenly kingdom.³¹²

The end of the letter is worth noting, as it refers directly back to two of Anselm's critical ethical themes. Baldwin is referred to scripture as the path which he ought to follow, and he is given the metaphor of a path traveling between the temporal life on earth and the eternal kingdom of heaven.

Anselm's letter, to Humbert, Count and Marquess, sent in 1102 or 1103 represents clear papal imagery and argumentation from Anselm and is therefore worth including. It makes clear Anselm's strongly Gregorian leanings and shows that he was familiar with and adhered to reform ideas of papal authority.

You see, my dearest lord, how our mother, the Church of God, whom God calls his beautiful friend and beloved spouse,³¹³ is trampled upon by evil princes, in what manner she is oppressed by those to whom she has been entrusted by God as advocates for her protection, to their own eternal damnation. With what presumption do they usurp her goods for their own use, with what cruelty do they reduce her liberty to servitude, with what unscrupulousness do they despise and ruin her law and religion. When they disdain to be obedient to the decrees of the Pope, which he made for the strength of the Christian religion, they prove themselves to be disobedient to the apostle Peter, as whose deputy he acts, indeed to our Lord Christ, who entrusted his Church to Peter. Therefore, let those who despise the Christian decrees of the vicar of Peter, and in him of Peter and of Christ, seek other gates to the kingdom of heaven because they will certainly not enter through those for which

³¹¹ See Ps 118:35.

³¹² Anselm, Ep. 235 Ne putetis vobis, sicut multi mali reges faciunt, ecclesiam dei quasi domino ad serviendum esse datam, sed sicut advocato et defensori esse commendatam. Nihil magis diligit deus in hoc mundo quam libertatem ecclesiae suae. Qui ei volunt non tam prodesse quam dominari, procul dubio deo probantur adversari. Liberam vult deus esse sponsam suam, non ancillam. Qui eam sicut filii matrem tractant et honorant, vere se filios eius et filios dei esse probant. Qui vero illi quasi subditae dominantur, non filios sed alienos se faciunt, et ideo iuste ab haereditate et dote illi promissa exhaeredantur. Qualem illam constituetis in regno vestro in hac nova resurrectione, talem illam diu suscipient et servabunt in futura generatione. Quod autem ego vobis persuadere desidero, oro deum omnipotentem, ut ipse persuadeat, et sic vos in via mandatorum suorum deducat, ut ad gloriam regni caelestis perducatur.

³¹³ Sg 4:7 – 8.

the apostle Peter carries the keys.³¹⁴ For all those who do not wish to be subject to the law of God are, without a doubt, considered God's enemies.³¹⁵ Therefore, my lord, do not think that the church which is in your realm has been given to you for hereditary dominion but rather for hereditary respect and protection. Love her as your mother, honor her as the spouse and friend of God. For whoever tramples upon her will be trampled underfoot, outside of her, with the devils, but whoever glorifies her will be glorified in her and with her among the angels.³¹⁶

Although parts of the church exist within the geographic areas temporally controlled by princes, they are *de facto* if not *de jure* part of the divine and therefore not subject to the rule of any prince. When princes do try to rule them, they are attempting to usurp a portion of the divine, the very definition (usurping a will greater than their own) of bad ethical action. The comparison to devils seems far from coincidental, but rather refers back to the arguments made in a similar manner in *De casu diaboli*. The metaphor is further extended by obvious reference to Genesis 3:15.

Anselm's letter to Count Robert of Meulan, sent in September or October 1105, while Anselm was staying at Rheims, moves beyond the abstract. Anselm cites specific harms that have occurred and gives reasons why they must be remedied. He even includes the threat of divine retribution should this not occur. In a sense, this is the peak of normative philosophy

³¹⁴ See Mt 16:19.

³¹⁵ See Rm 8:7.

³¹⁶ Anselm, Ep. 262 Videtis, mi carissime domine, qualiter mater nostra, ecclesia dei, quam deus pulchram amicam et dilectam sponsam suam vocat, a malis principibus conculcatur, quomodo ab iis, quibus ut advocatis ad tuitionem a deo commendata est, ad eorum aeternam damnationem tribulatur. Qua praesumptione in proprios usus ipsi usurpaverunt res eius, qua crudelitate in servitutem redigunt libertatem eius, qua impietate contemnunt et dissipant legem et religionem eius. Qui cum dedignantur apostolici decretis, quae ad robur Christianae religionis facit, esse oboedientes: PETRO utique apostolo, cuius vice fungitur, immo domino Christo, qui PETRO commendavit ecclesiam suam, se probant esse inoboedientes. Quaerant igitur qui vicarii PETRI, et in eo PETRI et Christi, decreta Christiana contemnunt, alias regni caelorum portas, quia certe per illas non introibunt, quarum claves PETRUS apostolus portat. Omnes namque qui nolunt subiecti esse legi dei, absque dubio deputantur inimici dei. Ergo, mi domine, ne putetis ecclesiam, quae in vestro principatu est, vobis esse datam in haereditariam dominationem, sed in haereditariam reverentiam et tuitionem. Eam ut matrem vestram amate, ut sponsam et amicam dei honorate. Qui enim illam conculcant, extra illam cum daemonibus conculcabuntur; et qui illam glorificant, in illa et cum illa inter angelos glorificabuntur.

as it combines ethical duty, theological imagery and responsibilities, with a specific situation and application.

Consequently some people are thinking and saying that the King is not very anxious to hasten my return to England. Nor is he anxious that the Church of God, which God entrusted to him for its protection, and which has now been left desolate for nearly three years, although its pastor is alive, should be comforted by his return and presence and be gladdened by the spiritual guidance of which it has so long been deprived in those who love and long for his returns.³¹⁷

The key to this passage can be found in the allowance for the potential for the church to not be desolate. It is not as if there was not an appropriate individual at hand to manage the church, but rather Anselm is claiming that the king has been remiss in preventing Anselm from accomplishing positive and effective management.

For this reason I tell you that I fear greatly that the King might provoke the wrath of God against himself and against those by whose advice he puts off fulfilling such a necessary and reasonable matter, which it is his duty to do and which he can do without losing anything of what belongs to the royal power according to the will of God.³¹⁸

Once more the threat of a wrathful God is made and in a remarkably straightforward manner, Anselm stipulates that the king is duty-bound to use his royal power according to the will of God.

Anselm's letter to Henry I provides a further example with a higher level of abstraction and a more generally political tone. Anselm informs him that the Church is not simply objecting to Henry specifically on the issue, but that, as a point of conflict, it is a matter that cannot be

³¹⁷Anselm, Ep. 369 Unde quidam opinantur et dicunt quia rex non multum curat festinare, ut ego redeam in Angliam, et ecclesia dei, quam deus illi custodiendam commendavit, quae iam fere per tres annos desolata est, suo vivo pastore, eius reditu et praesentia consoletur, et pro consilio animae suae, quo diu privata est, in illis qui hoc amant et desiderant laetificetur.

³¹⁸Anselm, Ep. 369 Quapropter dico vobis quia valde timeo, ne ipse super se provocet iram dei et super eos, quorum consilio differt tam necessariae rei, tam rationabili succurrere, cum ad illum hoc pertineat et facere possit, ut nihil perdat de iis quae secundum deum ad regiam pertinent potestatem.

compromised upon. This is argued, unusually for Anselm, by custom and precedent in addition to his more common themes.

Now I hear that your excellency is inflicting punishment upon priests in England and exacting fines from them for not having kept the decree of the Council which I, with other bishops and religious persons, held in London with your approval. Up to now this has been unheard of and unprecedented in the Church of God on the part of any king or any prince. By the law of God it is not for anyone except each bishop in his own diocese to punish an offence of this kind or, if the bishops themselves are negligent in this, then for the archbishop and primate. Therefore I beseech you as my dearest lord, whose soul I love more than the present life of my body, and I advise you as a true friend of your body and soul, not to cast yourself into such a grave sin contrary to ecclesiastical custom and, if you have already begun to do so, to give it up completely. I tell you that you ought to fear greatly that money received in such a way – not to mention how harmful it is for your soul – will not help your earthly business as much when it is spent as it will inflict harm later on. Moreover, you know that in Normandy you received me into your peace and repossessed me of my archbishopric, and that the care and punishment of such an offence pertains above all to the archbishopric, since I am more a bishop for spiritual care than for earthly possessions.³¹⁹

The ending of the letter is particularly telling. Not only is there an appeal to Henry's own self-interest, but Anselm also reminds Henry that he is his Archbishop and ultimately in

³¹⁹Anselm, Ep. 391 Audio quod vestra excellentia vindictam exercet super presbyteros Angliae et forisfacturam exigit ab eis, quia non servaverunt praeceptum concilii, quod ego cum vestro favore tenui apud Lundoniam cum aliis episcopis et religiosis personis. Quod hactenus inauditum et inusitatum est in ecclesia dei de ullo rege et de aliquo principe. Non enim pertinet secundum legem dei huiusmodi culpam vindicare, nisi ad singulos episcopos per suas parochias, aut, si et ipsi episcopi in hoc negligentes fuerint, ad archiepiscopum et primatem. Precor igitur vos sicut carissimum dominum, cuius animam diligo plus quam praesentem vitam corporis mei, et consulo sicut vere fidelis corpori et animae vestrae, ne vos contra ecclesiasticam consuetudinem in tam grave peccatum mittatis, et si iam incepistis, ut omnino desistatis. Dico enim vobis quod valde timere debetis quia pecunia taliter accepta - ut taceam quantum noceat animae - non tantum, cum expendetur, adiuvabit terrena negotia, quantum postea perturbabit. Denique vos scitis quia me in Normannia in pacem vestram suscepistis et de archiepiscopatu meo me resaisistis, et quia cura et vindicta talis offensae maxime pertinet ad archiepiscopatum, quoniam plus sum episcopus pro spirituali cura quam pro terrena possessione.

charge of his spiritual wellbeing. Therefore, for Anselm, the issue is doubly distressing and ably shows the strain between benefits in the temporal and eternal sense.

This section has shown that, for Anselm, it is critical that kings allow the church her freedom and that they support her in her endeavours through personal action and just rule. Yet on the surface, Anselm does not directly inform the kings and princes in question how best to fully support the church. He addresses the individual rules that must guide a prince when discussing God's Law.

Anselm uses statements about 'God's law' in two ways. The first is in terms of personal governance and squares strongly with his statements about ethical philosophy. A man who is in accord with God's will and maintains the uprightness of will necessary to complete the actions he intends will necessarily be in accordance with God's law. The second is in terms of the governance of nations and as to its precise meaning we must, at times, speculate. At its most simplistic level it can be viewed as a society wide adherence to the rules put forward for the governing of the individual, yet it seems to encompass more and certainly the later development's in medieval political thought took the concept and expanded it to do so. It is, however, worth supposing that it encompasses Anselm's main outlook on normative philosophy as a whole; that within the Holy Scriptures can be found, with the application of reason, instructions for the individual and society.

What is clear is that Anselm emphasises the positives of following God's law and the negatives for not doing so in both a temporal and eternal context. It is clear that he sees it as a path between the temporal and eternal and as such it fits closely with the rest of his normative vision. In a letter written to Clementia, Countess of Flanders in Autumn 1102, Anselm makes a blanket statement that makes his position on God's law clear, stating, 'Admonish him never to oppose God's law, for Scripture, which does not lie, states that those who are not subject to it are undoubtedly enemies of God.'³²⁰ However, no clue is given as to what God's law entails or involves, as Anselm states elsewhere that scripture can require interpretation. In addition, subsequent examples will show that, though based on scripture,

³²⁰Anselm, Ep. 249 Monete eum, ut numquam adversetur legi dei, quia qui illi subditi non sunt, scriptura, quae non mentitur, asserit illos indubitanter inimicos esse dei.

God's law can contain much that is included elsewhere, such as Papal decrees and ecclesiastical tradition.

A pair of letters, written to Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, provide a degree of perspective on the issue and to establish the parameters within which Anselm was working.

I beseech, therefore, I entreat and admonish you as my lord and friend that you strive to govern yourself and all those subject to you according to the law and will of God so that you may set a bright example by your life to all the kings of earth.³²¹

Hence, my dearest lord, even though you have no need of my exhortation yet, out of the abundance of my heart and as your most faithful friend I beg, admonish and beseech you and pray to God that by living under God's law you may submit your will to the will of God in all things. For only if you reign according to the will of God will you truly reign for your own benefit.³²²

When put next to and in the same context as the will of God, we are able to extrapolate a great deal and particularly in the earlier letter, the final sentence of the quotation provided allows us to establish a partial definition. God's law appears to be the series of rules that allow us to align our wills with the will of God. Typically in Anselm's normative philosophy, this equates to following the Holy Scriptures, yet our next two letters show that it encompasses far more. As in the previous letters, this is phrased as being for the king's own good.

Once more Anselm is at his most direct when writing to King Henry. In a letter written in 1104 Anselm argues by custom, historical precedent and ethics in such a way that obedience of God's law can be Henry's only conclusion.

³²¹Anselm, Ep. 324 Precor ergo, obsecro, moneo ut dominum, ut dilectum, quatenus et vestram personam et omnes vobis subditos sic regere secundum legem et voluntatem dei studeatis, ut lucidum exemplum omnibus regibus terrae in vita vestra praebeatis.

³²²Anselm, Ep. 235 Unde, mi carissime domine, etiamsi mea exhortatione non egeatis, tamen ex cordis abundantia ut fidelissimus amicus precor vos, moneo, obsecro et deum oro, quatenus sub lege dei vivendo voluntatem vestram voluntati dei per omnia subdatis. Tunc enim vere regnatis ad vestram utilitatem, si regnatis secundum dei voluntatem.

I give thanks for your friendship and your goodwill. With regard to what you say about your father and Archbishop Lanfranc I reply that neither at my baptism nor at any of my ordinations did I promise to observe the law or custom of your father or of Archbishop Lanfranc but rather the law of God and of all the orders which I received. Wherefore, if you wish me to be with you in such a way that I may be able to live according to the law of God and my rank, and if you reinvest me according to that same law of God with everything which you received from my archbishopric since I left you, and which, had I been present, you would not have received my consent: if you promise me this I am prepared to come back to you in England and, with God's help, to serve God and you and all those entrusted to me according to the office laid upon me by God. Indeed, there is no other mortal king or prince with whom I would rather live or whom I would rather serve. However, if you absolutely refuse to accept this, then you will be doing what pleases you; I indeed, by the grace of God, shall never deny his law.³²³

Once more Anselm feels the need to include the threat of divine retribution while phrasing his argument as for the King's own benefit. This is set in terms of positive temporal benefits, but also prefaced by a reiteration of examples of sacramental theology. Mentions of baptism and ordination serve not only to underpin the sacred nature of Anselm's cause, but also to demonstrate to the King that Anselm is under oaths made to the divine that he dare not break.

I dare not – because I ought not – omit to tell you that God will not merely demand of you whatever royal power owes him but also whatever pertains to the office of the Primate of England. This burden is too much for you. Nor ought you to be

³²³Anselm, Ep. 319 De amicitia et de bona voluntate gratias ago. Ad hoc quod dicitis de patre vestro et archiepiscopo LANFRANCO, respondeo quia neque in baptismo neque in aliqua ordinatione mea promisi me servaturum legem vel consuetudinem patris vestri aut LANFRANCI archiepiscopi, sed legem dei et omnium ordinum quos suscepi. Quapropter si vultis me sic esse vobis cum, ut possim vivere secundum legem dei et ordinem meum, et me revestitis secundum eandem legem dei de omnibus rebus quas de archiepiscopatu meo accepistis, postquam a vobis discessi, quas, si praesens essem, non deberetis me nolente accipere, et hoc mihi promittitis: paratus sum redire ad vos in Angliam et servire deo et vobis et omnibus mihi commissis secundum officium mihi a deo iniunctum, ipso adiuvante. Siquidem cum nullo alio rege aut principe mortali volo tam libenter esse aut ei servire. Si autem hoc nequaquam suscipitis, vos facietis quod vobis placebit; ego vero deo annuente non abnego legem eius.

displeased at what I say. No man subjects himself to God's law with greater advantage than the King, and no man disregards his law at greater risk. For it is not I but Holy Scripture that says: The mighty will suffer mightier torments³²⁴ and: The stronger pains threaten the more powerful;³²⁵ may God avert this from you!³²⁶

Here God's Law not only encompasses Holy Scripture, but the Papal Decrees forbidding investiture. It also seems to have acquired an additional component of responsibility. By appointing bishops, the king becomes responsible for the conduct and action of those bishops in much the same manner as he is responsible for the rest of his kingdom. The appointment of bishops was an opportunity to enact sweeping reform and to ensure an ethically good kingdom. In every instance in which a king invested a bishop Anselm would no doubt have said that they had not only usurped a will greater than their own (making the action ethically wrong), but also taken upon themselves the responsibility of the spiritual growth of the see into which they placed the bishop. With usurped power comes usurped responsibility.

Anselm's statement that he is the Primate of England requires a degree of analysis. Typically, due to the ongoing disagreement between York and Canterbury as to which was Primate, Anselm styled himself as Primate of Britain. In this specific instance however, he seems intent to establish that the church has a specific role within the realm, a role every bit as important as that of the king. Whenever Anselm speaks of himself in the letter, he speaks of law and intent, in other words types of authority. In contrast, when he speaks of the king, the language used is that of power and force. Although it is difficult to be too precise from a single example, this would appear to be an instance in which Anselm is directly contrasting the *potestas* of the *regnum* with the *auctoritas* of the *sacerdotium*.

³²⁴ Wi 6:7.

³²⁵ Wi 6:9.

³²⁶ Anselm, Ep. 319 Et non audeo - quoniam non debeo - tacere vobis quia non solum requiret deus a vobis quod debet illi regia potestas, sed quidquid pertinet ad primatis Angliae ministerium. Quod onus nimis est vobis importabile. Nec vobis debet displicere quod dicam. Nulli homini magis expedit quam regi se subdere legi dei, et nullus periculosius se subtrahit a lege eius. Dicit enim sacra scriptura, non ego: "Potentes potenter tormenta patientur"; et: "fortioribus fortior instat cruciatus"; quod deus a vobis avertat!

A further example of this view is provided in a letter to King Henry, Previously mentioned in this chapter.³²⁷ It sets out firmly the distinction between the roles of the *regnum* and the *sacerdotium* and warns against Henry infringing upon an area of society that was not within his mandate.

In this instance, Anselm has added ecclesiastical custom to the list of things that comprise God's law. Seemingly then, it should be defined in broad terms to encompass the mass of the authority of the Church, each element getting the King closer to the will of God and therefore to a ethically good standpoint for the individual and the kingdom.

It has already been shown that Anselm was fond of reminding kings to obey God's will, indeed, for him it was the equivalent of reminding them to be ethically good. From Anselm therefore, an instruction to disobey the king was a serious offence and suggested that the individual in question was making an important ethical choice as to whether they were supporting and following temporal or divine power and authority. As such, Anselm often emphasised the negatives of not obeying the will of God. At times these threats were veiled, but as the examples below will demonstrate, Anselm was capable of being startlingly direct.

Returning to Anselm's letter written to Robert, Count of Meulan in 1105, Anselm firmly establishes that God's will must triumph, when God chooses to act. Elements of the letter are clearly meant as a threat and it should not be overlooked that Anselm clarifies God's wrath to include those whose advice has led the king astray.³²⁸

For this reason I tell you that I fear greatly that the King might provoke the wrath of God against himself and against those by whose advice he puts off fulfilling such a necessary and reasonable matter, which it is his duty to do and which he can do without losing anything of what belongs to the royal power according to the will of God. As friend and as archbishop, whatever sort of person I may be, I advise the King and those about him not to strive to satisfy their own will more than the will of God because God may one day satisfy his will against the will of those who act in this way. Give him counsel therefore and take counsel for yourselves before God shows

³²⁷Anselm, Ep. 391

³²⁸ Such a threat was by no means unique to Anselm, with Pope Paschal insinuating that God's wrathful behaviour was responsible for Henry's brother's death. (Letter 244)

his wrath, which up to now he has held back while waiting for you to bow to his will.³²⁹

Anselm takes pains to point out that God's will is in no way contrary to royal power, indeed a successful reign is contingent upon the close adherence to God's will. As such, it ought to be a pleasure to do so as it is clearly the better option.

Anselm's letter, written to Prior Ernulf and the Monks of Canterbury, sent in July 1103 from Bec, contains an interesting example of Anselm warning members of the Church to purposely disobey the will of the king in favour of obeying the will of God. Anselm makes it clear that the King's power pales into insignificance next to God's and that, though unpleasant at the time, the King's displeasure is a small price to pay for the maintenance of God's favour. One of the critical facets of this letter is that Anselm informs Ernulf in no uncertain terms that his obedience ought to be addressed towards Anselm and not necessarily towards the King:

Indeed I was not a little surprised at the King's request about which you informed me, but I was glad that you did not wish to do anything without our advice, as is proper for you, and were mindful of our commands. For when God sees you acting rightly and according to your rule, he has the power of diverting from the royal will all the displeasure which you fear to be growing against you because of this. But if it should not please him to do this, and for this reason something should happen to you against your will – which God avert! – you should be certain that it is better to suffer something because of righteousness³³⁰ with God's consolation than to do anything irregularly by offending him. Therefore in this matter I await the disposition of God to whom I commend myself and you and all our possessions. As you advised, I shall ask the King through our friend, the reverend Bishop of

³²⁹Anselm, Ep. 369 Quapropter dico vobis quia valde timeo, ne ipse super se provocet iram dei et super eos, quorum consilio differt tam necessariae rei, tam rationabili succurrere, cum ad illum hoc pertineat et facere possit, ut nihil perdat de iis quae secundum deum ad regiam pertinent potestatem. Sicut amicus et sicut archiepiscopus - qualiscumque sim - consulo illi et iis qui circa illum sunt, ut non plus studeant satisfacere voluntati suae quam voluntati dei, quia deus aliquando satisfaciet voluntati suae contra voluntatem illorum, qui hoc faciunt. Consulite ergo illi et vobis, priusquam deus ostendat iram suam, quam adhuc suspendit, exspectans ut humiliemini ad voluntatem suam.

³³⁰ Mt 5:10.

Rochester, to permit our whole diocese to live in peace and tranquillity as he promised me.³³¹

The manner in which Anselm makes his case is based strongly on ethical lines and the assertion that the long term is more critical than the immediate, both central themes of his teleology. More fundamentally, Anselm is asking Ernulf to act in a manner that may make his life more difficult but is, from Anselm's perspective, the just course of action. It is a literal example of Anselm's insistence that good ethical action is comprised of prioritising the happiness of God's justice before the happiness of the benefit of the individual.

It is also interesting to note that Anselm was prepared to ascribe temporal powers to members of the church in specific circumstances. The following example, a letter written to Willian, Bishop-Elect of Winchester, and sent in 1104 or 1105 from Lyon, shows that at times bishops would be expected to take on military and governmental roles. Although the precise circumstances in which this ought to happen are never elucidated by Anselm, taken in conjunction with the examples provided in my section on violence and warfare, it is easy to see how conflict could emerge between a temporally powerful king and an active bishop with the belief of eternal authority to back them up.

The essence of the case on which you sought advice, as far as we understand it, is this: whether you can rightly give the castle you hold from Duke Robert to his brother, King Henry, against the will of the Duke, because of the injustices which the Duke has committed against you as you reported. We consider before God and before all just men that you cannot do this. For even if the Duke freed you from what you owe him by your oath of allegiance and through the faith you have promised him or through any common custom, he could not free you from what

³³¹Anselm, Ep. 292 De regis namque petitione quam mandastis, non parum miratus sum; sed quia nihil sine nostro consilio, sicut vos decet, facere voluistis et praecepti nostri memores fuistis, gavisus sum. Potens est enim deus regiam voluntatem ab omni indignatione, quam hac occasione adversum vos nasci timetis, avertere, cum vos recte et ordinate facere conspiciet; aut si hoc illi facere non placuerit et aliquid inde vobis contra voluntatem vestram - quod deus avertat! contigerit: certi esse debetis quia melius est pati aliquid "propter iustitiam" sub dei consolatione, quam aliquid facere inordinate in eius offensione. De hoc igitur dei dispositionem, cui me et vos et omnia nostra commendo, exspectabo; et sicut consuluistis, regi per reverendum et amicum nostrum episcopum Rofensem, ut totum episcopatum nostrum in pace et quiete permanere permittat, sicut mihi promisit, mandabo.

you owe to God and your neighbor for the sake of God and on account of the Christian religion. For this reason we consider that you should not disinherit the aforesaid Duke of what you hold from him and hand his inheritance over to his enemy. In this matter it is very important that your love take care not to receive episcopal consecration yet; if you should do what the King is demanding of you no one would ever be able to blot out the execrable rumor that this was done in order to buy the bishopric which you feared to lose. Therefore, since we must take care for what is good not only before God but also before men,³³² may God avert this from you and may he never permit such an evil example to be spread about you through any gossip. With regard to the fact that you received the aforesaid castle from the King, as if you were his man: if you swore him this oath of allegiance merely to obtain the office, we think that you are in no way bound to it, so that you may allow him the use of this castle against the Duke. Moreover, just as no man should promise anything against the will of God, so he should not perform what he has so promised under any circumstances, nor can anyone rightly demand this of him.³³³

In many respects, this discussion is typical of the medieval political environment. Anselm's position is unsurprising, although the consistency of his ethical philosophy and the addition of the normative elements that these letters entail makes this a critical aspect of his image of kingship. The clash of the will of the king and the will of God is to be seen in the same

³³² Fröhlich identifies this as Rm 12:17 Vulg.

³³³ Anselm, Ep. 322 Cuius consilii, in quantum intelleximus, haec est summa, videlicet: utrum de castello quod de comite ROBERTO tenetis, possitis licite fratri eius, regi HENRICO, contra eundem comitem deservire, propter iniustitias quas idem comes vobis facit, sicut mandastis. Quod nequaquam coram deo et coram iustis hominibus licite fieri posse intelligimus. Nam, etiam si vos de hoc absolvit, quod illi debebatis per hominum aut per fidem promissam sive per aliquam communem conventionem: non vos potuit absolvere de hoc, quod deo et proximo propter deum debetis per Christianam religionem. Quapropter intelligimus quia non debetis praefatum comitem de hoc quod de illo habetis exheredare, et hereditatem eius inimico suo tradere. In hoc quoque vos multum oportet intendere quod nondum vestra dilectio suscepit episcopi consecrationem; et si hoc faceretis quod a vobis rex exigit, nullus posset extinguere execrabilem famam quia hoc factum esset propter episcopatus, quem perdere timeretis, redemptionem. Quam ob rem, quoniam providemus "bona non tantum coram deo, sed etiam coram hominibus": avertat deus hoc a vobis, neque umquam permittat tam pravum exemplum ulla opinione exire de vobis. Quod autem a rege praedictum castellum, sicut eius homo eratis, accepistis: nullo modo cognoscimus vos ad hoc astringere, ut eum eodem castello contra comitem uti permittatis, si ei hominum non nisi salvo ordine fecistis. Denique, sicut nullus homo aliquid contra deum debet promittere, ita promissum nullatenus debet perficere, nec aliquis hoc recte potest exigere.

context as if it were the will of any other individual competing with the will of God. The difference and main factor involved is the power that Kings are able to wield and therefore their potential to prevent others from following God's will or, indeed, punish them for doing so. As we shall see in the next section, such concerns were not unique to Anselm.

Although it does not comprise a major portion of this thesis, it is important to note that at certain moments in Anselm's discussion of monastic governance he uses similar lines of argumentation to those that can be seen in his discussions of secular governance. As both the monastic and secular follow the same set of ethical principles, this should not be surprising. Certain elements that are expressed in the monastic letters contain insights into Anselm's views that he may have considered inappropriate to send to secular rulers who, while not explicitly his Lords, did not owe him the same degree of obedience. As such, when drawing a close comparison, we are able to see important extensions of, and in doing so clarify, Anselm's thought.

Anselm's letter to Lanfrid, Abbot of St Wulmar, of about 1095 effectively explains the importance of having a ruler in a society and the minimum benefit that is required for a ruler to be a positive influence upon that society.

I HAVE FREQUENTLY AND DEEPLY PONDERED on my own and spoken to others from whom I hoped for spiritual counsel, about your petition in which you indefatigably request me to try, by my counsel and prayers, to obtain leave from your bishop for you to give up the abbacy in which divine will has placed you. I have realized that although I would rejoice greatly with you, because of the compassion I feel for your fraternity's sadness, if you could obtain your desire by the mercy of God and with the advice and permission of your bishop and your archbishop, yet it would be dangerous for me to seek and advise such an unusual step. For I fear that I would sin not a little if, at my request, the place entrusted to you should be made destitute of every kind of ruler and even be completely destroyed through the loss of goods, established practice and higher orders. If your presence there were of no other use than to prevent evil from reigning there unchecked by any censure, it would not be so bad with regard to the destruction of order and property as it would be if there were no ruler; in that case, if you were repressing so much physical and

spiritual evil and saving the aforesaid place from destruction you could not complain that you were living a useless life. How much the more, then, can your prudence take consolation from the fact that there are some under you who desire to take your advice and guidance and obey it with willing subjection?³³⁴

For Anselm then, the absolute minimum role of a ruler is to prevent the unchecked spread of evil, both spiritual and physical. Yet, this is far from the complete scope that the role might occupy. Higher levels of advice and guidance also seem critical and Anselm suggests in the final sentence that when obedience is willingly given, it is clear that a ruler is not wholly failing at those tasks.

There is also another reason why you should rejoice in your tribulation, namely that there is no doubt that you bear it because of your good zeal and love of God, and because your fear of God will not let you dare to flee it. Surely, where there are so many grounds for consolation and spiritual joy, the bitterness of sorrow should not have such great weight. Indeed, God does not only consider how much effort of anyone helps others, but also, and perhaps even more, how much hardship one endures by wanting to help and in grieving because one does not help as one wishes. It is up to us to labor and sow, and up to God to give the growth and the produce.³³⁵

³³⁴Anselm, Ep. 186 De petitione vestra, qua mihi infatigabiliter instatis, quatenus ab episcopo vestro consilio et precibus meis tentem impetrare vobis licentiam abbatiam, in qua vos divina constituit dispositio, deserendi: saepe multum que me cum cogitavi et cum aliis, in quibus consilium spirituale speravi, sum locutus; et intellexi, quamvis propter compassionem, qua tristitiae fraternitatis vestrae compatiar, valde vobis congauderem, si dei miseratione consilio et permissione archiepiscopi et episcopi vestri desiderium vestrum assequeremini: periculosum tamen mihi esse tam inusitatam rem petere et consulere. Timeo enim me non parum peccare, si mea instantia locus vobis commissus omni rectore destituitur atque et rerum et morum et ordinis maiori, immo omnimoda vastatione destruitur. Si enim ad aliud ibi vestra non prodesset praesentia, nisi quia non ibi regnare potest nec libere exerceri sine aliqua reprehensione malitia, nec ita male ibi est, sicuti esset, si esset sine rectore, aut in ordinis aut in rerum destructione: non tamen possetis conqueri quasi ibi inutiliter viveretis, ubi tantum malum et corporale et spirituale, ne locum praedictum destrueret, comprimeretis. Quanto magis nunc se vestra consolari potest prudentia, cum sint aliqui sub illa, qui eius consilio et gubernatione uti desiderant et voluntaria subiectione illi oboediunt?

³³⁵ See 1 Cor 3:6f.

He repays what is our due, even if it is ours through his help; but what is due to him, he ascribes to himself.³³⁶

Anselm makes several direct comparisons to other areas of his ethical philosophy, most notably in his reference to First Corinthians. By persevering in a difficult position and situation, Lanfrid is displaying his devotion and preparing his claim to eternal reward. His intention is referenced as a key component that turns his strife into something from which he can take spiritual joy.

However if your mind is not willing or not able to accept this opinion, and if through your bishop and those who are responsible for these things you are able to achieve your wish in a lawful manner by God's disposition then I do not forbid it.³³⁷

Ultimately Anselm does not prevent his desire from leaving his abbatial calling, but does insist that if such a move is to occur, that it occurs appropriately and following church precedent. The theme of obedience is strong throughout the letter, as it is in the majority of Anselm's monastic writings.

The next letter that we will examine is particularly important for our broader discussion as Anselm is addressing more than one level of the hierarchy simultaneously. As such, we are able gain an insight into how he would have viewed a societal structure as opposed to simply seeing specific scenario dependent advice.

In a letter of 1093 to Abbot William and the Monks of Bec, Anselm's references to love and the monks being, 'of one mind', show his ethical theory at its most spiritual. Both of these sentiments are typical of Anselm's thought; the former referring to Anselm's anthropology

³³⁶Anselm, Ep. 186 Est et aliud unde in tribulatione vestra debetis gaudere, quia non est dubium vos illam bono zelo et amore dei habere et timore dei, cuius consideratione illam fugere non audetis, sustinere. Certe ubi tot rationes sunt consolationis et spiritualis laetitiae, non magnum pondus habere debet amaritudo tristitiae. Quippe non solum considerat deus, quantum studium alicuius in aliis proficiat, sed etiam aut forsitan magis, quantum laborem in intentione proficiendi et dolore, quia non proficit secundum intentionem, sustineat. Nostrum enim est laborare et seminare, dei vero est incrementum et effectum dare. Quod nostrum est, quamvis illo adiuvante sit, nobis retribuit; quod autem suum est, sibi attribuit.

³³⁷Anselm, Ep. 186 Quod si haec mens vestra non vult aut non valet suscipere, non prohibeo, si per episcopum vestrum et per eos, ad quos res haec pertinet, deo disponente ad desiderium vestrum ordinate potestis pertingere.

with love being the purpose of man. Agreement between the monks is a clear reference to Anselm's desire for one will amongst men and that will being as similar to God's as possible. As Anselm states in any number of other letters, heaven is a place where all have the same will and that will is the will of God, so such exhortations are designed to make the temporal paradise of the cloister as similar to the eternal paradise of heaven.

However, bearing paternal solicitude for you now as always, I admonish you as my dearest sons, as those whom I loved and wish to continue to love with most tender affection in the compassion of Christ, to be of one mind toward one another,³³⁸ according to the holy Apostle. May you daily direct the intention of your souls towards better things, and show humble obedience in all things towards him whom divine loving kindness wished to place over you. Remember the command by which the same Apostle admonishes us, saying: Obey your superiors and subject yourselves to them.³³⁹

It is of interest that Anselm uses some of his strongest language on obedience in this context. It is possible that he seeks to ensure that the allegiance of the monks passes effectively to his successor.

To you, my dearest brother William, tested by my soul in every observance of holy religion, whom the grace of God decided to make pastor after me over such a holy flock of monks, I offer this suggestion: Take such care of the souls of the brothers placed under your rule that, with the protection of God, the snares of the crafty enemy may not succeed in harming them by any device but, protected by the guardianship of your care, they may rejoice in having found the shelter of a good shepherd. Hasten then to show yourself moderate in everything you do, so that grace may not exclude justice nor justice grace by any sort of secret dealing; you should always combine the one with the other so that in both, the discipline of the

³³⁸ Rom 12:16.

³³⁹ Hebr 13:17; Anselm, Ep. 165 Paternam tamen nunc - sicut semper - sollicitudinem pro vobis gerens, moneo vos sicut filios meos carissimos, et sicut eos quos in visceribus Christi tenerrimo semper affectu dilexi et diligere volo, ut secundum beati apostoli vocem "id ipsum invicem" sentiat, propositum animi ad meliora cotidie dirigatis, et ei quem divina pietas vobis praeesse voluit, humilem in omnibus oboedientiam exhibeatis, memores illius praecepti, quo nos idem apostolus admonet dicens: "Oboedite praepositis vestris et subicite vos eis".

monastery may be maintained by inviolable righteousness. Never cast out of your soul what the Lord says to the negligent pastor through Solomon: My son, if you have become surety for your friend, you have given your pledge to a stranger. You have been snared by the words of your mouth and caught by your own words.³⁴⁰ I would like to speak at greater length if the brevity of a letter permitted it and if your holiness did not know how to practice these things better than I can express them.³⁴¹

In the final quotation from this letter we see Anselm making an emphatic statement about the aim of rule. The successful ruler will inspire those he rules to rejoice in having a shepherd of such skill. This is in sharp contrast with the minimalistic vision of the purpose of rule that we encountered in the first letter we examined. The responsibility of rulers comes with great power and ought to command the obedience of those whom they rule, but they also have a strong responsibility to protect them from harm and ensure their spiritual furtherance. They accomplish this by balancing virtues carefully and moderating them against each other. Justice at times may seem harsh and unrelenting, but it can be softened by grace to preserve righteousness.

Many of these elements are similar to Anselm's statements about secular governance and rule. Obedience is still a critical facet, both in terms of the obedience from the ruled to the ruler, but also between the ruler and God. Justice is emphasised, but moderated. So too, though is the responsibility of the ruler. Not only do they have a responsibility to take up with good intention and to maintain the position that God has given them, they also must seek to promote the will of God on earth and in harmony amongst larger groups of individuals as this goal is once more paramount. As a minimum they must seek to prevent

³⁴⁰ Prov 6:1.

³⁴¹ Anselm, Ep. 165 Tibi autem, carissime frater WILLELME et in omni sanctae religionis observantia animo meo probate, quem dei gratia tam sancto monachorum gregi rectorem post me fieri constituit: hanc facio suggestionem, ut ita de animabus fratrum sub tuo regimine consistentium sollicitus existas, quatenus callidi hostis insidiae nulla eis arte, protegente deo, nocere valeant, sed sollicitudinis tuae custodia vallati, boni pastoris tutamina se invenisse gaudeant. Sic que te in omnibus quae agis moderatum exhibere festines, ut neque iustitiam gratia neque gratiam iustitia qualibet umquam privata subreptione excludat, sed ita altero semper alterum coniungas, ut in utroque monasterii ordo inviolata rectitudine servari valeat. Numquam ab animo tuo excidat quod dominus negligenti pastori per SALOMONEM dicit: "Fili mi, si spoponderis pro amico tuo, defixisti apud extraneum manum tuam. Illaqueatus es verbis oris tui et captus propriis sermonibus tuis". Plura me loqui delectaret, si aut epistolaris brevitatis permitteret, aut tua sanctitas melius facere quam ego dicere nesciret.

evil, both in a physical and spiritual sense, but they should also actively seek to surmount this pessimistic view.

While it is true that Anselm does not develop an original or comprehensive political theory of kingship, it is clear that he has definite ideas about the role of the king. Furthermore, it is clear that he sees the temporal role of the king as an extension and, ideally, an enforcement of the ethical system that he presents in his other works. Naturally, this letter collection can only provide the briefest glimpse of what each of the criteria for good kingship might entail, but some are unambiguous. The king must be just and virtuous. He has been put in his position by God, and because God has given him such power and the ability to enact positive change, he has a ethical obligation to ensure that he uses it in a just and virtuous fashion. He ought to ensure the peace, as, for Anselm, that is the foundation upon which all else can be built. He must protect the liberty of the church and be an advocate to the people for her role within society and her broader aims. Lastly, and most importantly, he must try to match his will to the will of God, for, that is how the kingdoms of the world can come closest to being the heavenly kingdom towards which all aim to progress. Such ideas permeated a number of letters with drastically different intents and to a wide variety of recipients. The temporal power of the King was shared with a number of aristocratic 'princes' and this led to Anselm adopting a similar tone in his pan-European correspondence.

Conclusion

It may be argued strongly that in adopting a new approach to examining Anselm's corpus as a coherent normative philosophy a more holistic view of his philosophical thought, especially with regard to ethics may be generated. Key insights into the breadth of Anselm's thought are provided while helping to place him more clearly in the intellectual milieu of the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. These include expansions of his ethical thought into more pragmatic realms and the examination of the extent to which he can be said to possess a political theory.

Anselm possessed a robust ethical theory, which, while not always elaborated upon directly in his treatises, is a significant element of his letter collection. Foundations of this theory exist within his other writings and are spread across a great deal of his corpus and life, even finding incorporation in his prayers and meditations. The vast majority of the instances in which his ethical theory is mentioned in his treatises, prayers, and meditations pertain to ethical or meta-ethical theory as opposed to practical or normative writings. This having been said, these writings provide a staunch foundation upon which his normative writings can rest with remarkable consistency apparent throughout. This consistency exists not only in his ethical statements, but is also apparent in his notions of theology, anthropology, and even political order.

From the evidence that is provided through this new analysis it is possible to conclude that Anselm is best described as teleological, albeit this is not mutually exclusive from a deontological interpretation, in that his overall interpretation, of the purpose of existence and good ethical action is the pathway between the temporal and the eternal. Both conveniently co-exist in the normative approach due to the differentiation of ethical action for the individual and for individuals who interact twinned with the resulting epistemological uncertainty of the outcome of any action. As such, it is possible for Anselm to hold that there are values which are inherently good, yet external to the actions of the individual, while still providing a normative analysis of what the individual ought to do based upon considerations that are exclusive to that individual.

An important component of this epistemological uncertainty can be seen in that, for Anselm, all normative action is contingent upon the refusal to knowingly do evil, even if the anticipated outcome is good. This also explains his strong theory of an ethics of intent that manifests itself as a link between his ethical theory and belief in sin. God is able to judge man based on his intentions, yet, in all but the most blatant examples, man cannot judge other men in this fashion. As such, Anselm possessed a rigorous system of virtue ethics which, while rarely discussed in his treatises, provides the basis of his normative system of ethics and a way in which men are able to judge other men. It is to be remembered that Anselm's theory of liberty is exclusively a theory of the liberty of virtue. A view that what we might call normative philosophy is able to cope with more effectively than traditional ethical approaches.

In so doing, modern conceptions of a stark divide between deontological and teleological conceptions are called into question. The same normative framework that is traditionally the exclusive realm of deontological conceptions of ethical theories, can be equally applied to a teleological conception if faith is allowed to play a substantive role in the manner in which the individual chooses to behave. While this may be less applicable in many modern contexts, it is a critical component of medieval thinkers and the manner in which modern commentators ought to interpret them.

Anselm made his ethical views increasingly normative with a consistent view on the manner in which individuals ought to be punished in monastic environments. Not only are his statements on the matter consistent with his ethical thought, they also allow a unique insight into the manner in which the cloistered walls were not as dissimilar, in an ethical context, to the lands which surrounded them. As an element of his normative philosophy, this view is alluded to in conjunction with his broader statements about how society ought to function, providing an effective bridge between the ethical and political.

The same normative evaluation of Anselm's writings allows certain deductions to be made about his political views and the way in which ethics ought to interact with political thought and action. Obedience is owed upon different levels unto different individuals and is a critical aspect of society. Without obedience, peace as a necessary precondition for higher ethical attainment is unlikely to exist. This effectively explains Anselm's views on violence

and warfare, not necessarily that they are innate harms in and of themselves, but because they cannot exist in conjunction with peace. In a similar fashion, justice in society becomes a necessary component of the ethical action of the prince as it is, to a degree, a prerequisite for peace.

In a further display of an understanding of epistemological uncertainty, Anselm repeatedly demonstrates that counsel is a key component of obedience and a way of ensuring that poor ethical decision making on behalf of a single individual does not destroy the peace that could otherwise exist. Such counsel is most often discussed in a normative context, but by no means exclusively. Kings and princes are encouraged to take advice, from Anselm himself if from no one else. While poor counsel was a common cause of criticism for rulers in medieval society, it is interesting to note that Anselm provides intellectual underpinning for these criticisms.

Political actors ought, therefore to be obedient to the Church in order to preserve and enhance both peace and justice. In this capacity they are to be protectors, advocates, and co-heirs, playing an active role in the promotion of the church and its spiritual aims. The primary component of this is ensuring the freedom of the church from all who would seek to oppress her. Most often this involved simple self-restraint. Anselm provides several reasons for this obligation to the church, but the most common is the relatively straight forward argument that as God provided kings and princes with their privileged positions in society they have a responsibility to repay the favour shown towards them.

However, Anselm takes the argument a step further. Political action ought to be contingent upon good ethical behaviour. A strong division is not made between the political and the ethical, political decisions are *de facto*, if not *de jure*, ethical decisions and must therefore conform to the same rigorous standards. All men ought to adhere to the same minimum of ethical standard, but men with a greater capacity for effecting ethically positive outcomes possess a higher standard for at least intending those outcomes to occur as this is the manner in which they will be judged by God.

Their actions and the degree to which they embrace virtue in pursuit of spreading peace and defending the church are the keys by which they can be measured by other men. The more

powerful the prince or king the larger the implications of this line of thought as they possess a correspondingly greater capacity to enact positive temporal change.

Further study in a historical context applying this research methodology could provide a more nuanced analysis of Anselm's life. His differing relationships with William Rufus and Henry I may well be explainable due to his perspective on which had the greater capacity to enact positive change. In addition, were the same theory applied to Anselm himself, his support of Gregorian Reforms could be re-analysed in a manner more coherent with his philosophical thought. Anselm's behaviour in relation to the other members of the clergy, for instance the Canterbury – York Primatial debate also seems to deserve closer scrutiny with this analysis in mind.

The history of ideas is equally well placed to benefit from a similar analysis. Re-evaluation of other thinkers in the same intellectual milieu as Anselm, using this methodology, could provide an increasingly clear understanding of the general intellectual climate in the 12th century, particularly in terms of those who referenced strongly or wrote about Anselm. Prime examples of this exist thematically in terms of conceptions of the prince, virtue ethics, and ethics of intent. In terms of specific thinkers, this analysis breathes new life into the discussion of links between Abelard and Anselm and also allows John of Salisbury to be compared to Anselm on a level that would not have previously been possible.

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